

GENERAL PICHEGRU'S
TREASON

SIR JOHN HALL, BART.



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GENERAL PICHEGRU'S TREASON



GENERAL FICHET

From an engraving by J. Chapman

GENERAL PICHEGRU'S TREASON

BY
SIR JOHN HALL, BART.

AUTHOR OF
"THE BOURBON RESTORATION"
"ENGLAND AND THE ORLEANS MONARCHY"

WITH PORTRAITS

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PREFACE

THE outbreak of war led me to postpone the publication of this volume, which was completed more than a year ago. But, although a return to peaceful conditions seems still remote, I have been advised that the present time may not be inopportune for the appearance of a work of this character. In the course of the struggle upon which we are now engaged, much has been heard of spies and of the enemy's system of espionage. In these circumstances, a story which illustrates certain aspects of our own secret service in a former war may prove of interest.

In recent years two French works have appeared dealing exclusively with Pichegru's treason. In his *Conjuration de Pichegru*, M. Ernest Daudet has set himself the ungrateful task of seeking to rehabilitate Pichegru's memory and his contribution to the history of the affair cannot be regarded as an impartial review of the subject. Moreover, he appears to have confined his researches to the archives at Chantilly and to have neglected entirely the very important correspondence of the English agents concerned in the business. No such criticism, however, can be applied to M. Caudrillier's work, *La trahison de Pichegru*. But, although it is evident that he must have spent much time at the London Record Office in consulting the despatches of both Wickham and Craufurd, he seems to have overlooked the many letters referring to Pichegru contained in the *Fortescue Papers*. Nor can either work claim to be a complete account of Pichegru's proceedings, seeing that

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neither M. E. Daudet nor M. Caudrillier carries the story further than the *coup d'état* of *fructidor*.

All French historians of the Consulate have referred to the part played by Pichegru in the plots fomented by the British government against Bonaparte. In dealing with that subject I have quoted freely from a certain rough diary, in which Windham was in the habit of recording any conversations of importance which he may have had in the course of the daily business of his department. To a greater extent than any other document I have discovered it shows the attitude of ministers towards the conspirators and the degree of knowledge which they possessed of their sinister designs. It is now among the *Windham Papers* at the British Museum and is quite distinct from his diary which was published in 1866.

JOHN HALL.

September, 1915.

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CHAPTER I

MR. WICKHAM'S MISSION

MR. PITT, in 1791, resolutely refused to subscribe to the doctrine, put forward by the Emperor Leopold, that all the monarchies of Europe must combine to uphold the unfettered sovereignty of Louis XVI. England, her chief minister declared, had no intention of interfering with the domestic affairs of France. Nor did the outbreak of war between France and Austria and Prussia cause him to modify his policy of strict neutrality. When, in the autumn of 1792, the allies retreated to the frontiers before the new levies of revolutionary France, Mr. Pitt was thankful only that his country was not involved in so ignominious an adventure. But, when Dumouriez entered the Low Countries, his disposition changed. From the moment that the French Republic manifested its intention of annexing Holland and the Belgian provinces of Austria, Mr. Pitt became its irreconcilable opponent.

England drew the sword not to avenge Louis XVI. but to avert the dangers of a French occupation of the Low Countries. France, on the other hand, adopted with enthusiasm Danton's declaration that the Rhine, the Alps, and the sea constituted her natural boundaries. No government, born of the revolution, could venture to repudiate this doctrine. Hence the restoration of

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the Bourbons, by making possible a return to pre-revolutionary frontiers, was gradually recognized by British ministers as the one solution which would permit them to conclude an honourable and lasting peace.

Immediately upon the outbreak of war, England proceeded to contract alliances and to despatch the few troops she could dispose of to the Low Countries. The campaign opened favourably. Dumouriez, defeated at Neerwinden, deserted to the Austrians, after failing to induce his army to declare in favour of a constitutional monarchy. Belgium was reconquered and the road to Paris lay open to the allied sovereigns. But there was no unanimity of purpose in the counsels of the coalition. Austria hoped to annex Alsace, to acquire Lille and Valenciennes, and to strengthen herself against Prussia by exchanging Belgium for Bavaria. These ends, her statesmen conceived, would be promoted more effectually by a continuance of anarchical conditions in France than by the destruction of the revolutionary government. Nor did Prussia regard the immediate overthrow of the Jacobins in Paris as the primary object of her policy. The attention of the Court of Berlin was absorbed not in the French war, but in negotiating a second partition of Poland, which Catherine had invaded directly her neighbours had become involved in hostilities with France. Thus, in the summer of 1793, instead of marching upon Paris, the allies expended their strength in besieging those towns, which they either hoped to retain permanently, or to hold as securities for indemnities to be obtained, when exhaustion should compel France to sue for peace.

While the strategy of the allies was thus subordinated to their separate aims and interests, the Convention proved equal to the emergency. The great Committee of Public Safety was established, the *levée*

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en masse was decreed, and Carnot was invested with the supreme direction of the war. Led by young generals, whose thirst for glory was stimulated by the knowledge that the *guillotine* awaited them in case of failure, the French armies marched from victory to victory. The Duke of York was forced to raise the siege of Dunkirk, the Austrians were defeated at Wattignies, the Prussians were driven from Alsace. Lyons, which had risen in revolt against the Convention, was retaken by Kellermann, Toulon was recaptured from the English and the Spaniards, and the formidable insurrection of La Vendée was crushed in two sanguinary battles in December. In the campaign of the following year the French successes were of a yet more decisive character. The Duke of York was defeated at Turcoing; Jourdan, on June 26, 1794, won the battle of Fleurus and, on July 5, the allies resolved to evacuate Belgium. The Committee of Public Safety had averted the peril of invasion. Four weeks after Fleurus, Robespierre fell and the Reign of Terror came to an end.

England had little cause for satisfaction with the results of more than a year of war. The capture of the French West Indian Islands and Lord Howe's victory of June 1 were but small compensations for continuous reverses in the chief theatre of operations. Being unable to send sufficient troops to the Low Countries, Mr. Pitt had been obliged to depend mainly upon the efforts of his allies. But Austria, it was soon evident, had no intention of putting forth her full strength in defence of her Belgian provinces. Prussia, in her eyes, was the real enemy, not the French Republic. England, however, had yet more cause to complain of the manner in which the Court of Berlin eluded its engagements. In the spring of 1794, Prussia agreed, in return for a sum of £300,000 and £150,000 a month, to place 60,000 men at the

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disposal of the British government for service in Belgium. But this undertaking she never carried out, and, in the autumn, Mr. Pitt declined to pay any further subsidies, it being clear that the King of Prussia purposed to employ every man of his army for the conquest of Poland, which had risen in rebellion under Kosciusko. Such was the situation when, on September 24, 1794, Lord Robert Fitzgerald, the British minister in Switzerland, transmitted to London a plan for the restoration of the monarchy in France, which had been drawn up by certain royalists professing to be in communication with Tallien, the chief author of Robespierre's overthrow.

The French Royalists at this time, and, indeed, throughout the whole period of the emigration, were a most disunited body. Monsieur, the Comte de Provence, who had declared himself Regent after the death of Louis XVI., was not upon good terms with his younger brother, the Comte d'Artois. Their immediate followers warmly espoused their sentiments and continuously caballed and intrigued against each other. But both these two sections of the party had a common political programme, whether they belonged to the *clique* of Monsieur or to that of his brother. All of them were agreed that the old *régime* must be restored intact and that the revolutionists must be punished with merciless severity. All of them, moreover, were animated with the most intense dislike of those faint-hearted Royalists who, in the early days of the revolution, had adhered to the principle of a constitutional monarchy. The *monarchiens*, as they called them, were, in their opinion, not less detestable, and infinitely more contemptible, than the avowed Jacobins.

The two persons responsible for the proposal received by Lord Grenville, on October 4, 1794, were distinguished members of the constitutional party. M. Mounier, the mover of the famous *oath of the*

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tennis court, had resigned his seat in the Assembly and had emigrated to Switzerland, in consequence of the indignities to which the King and Queen had been subjected, on October 5 and 6, 1789. M. Mallet du Pan, the Genevese publicist, had enjoyed the confidence of Louis XVI. and was deservedly reputed a man of great political sagacity. They now held out hopes that, by means of a fusion of all groups holding moderate opinions in the Convention, the monarchy might be restored in the person of Louis XVII. But they stipulated that the Powers must suspend hostilities, while the negotiations were in progress, and must take no part in the arrangement of French internal affairs.¹

Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville were disposed to attach great importance to this communication. The movement, known as the *thermidorean reaction*, which had been in progress in Paris since the fall of Robespierre, had necessarily attracted their closest attention. The re-establishment of the monarchy by an agreement between the different parties in France, as proposed by M. Mounier and his friends, was a statesmanlike conception with which they were prepared to concur heartily. England was in possession of several French colonies and was under no obligation to assist her allies to dismember France. Provided, therefore, that a stable government could be set up in Paris, which would agree to evacuate the Low Countries and to abandon the idea of the Rhine as a frontier, England would have attained the object for which she had gone to war.

M. Mounier and his friend, M. Malouet,² who was at this time in London, deprecated any mention of

¹ F. O. Switzerland 4, Fitzgerald to Grenville, September 24, 1794.

² F. O. Switzerland 4, Wickham to Grenville, October 7, 1794. Malouet, Pierre Victor (1740-1814), one of the leaders of the monarchical party in the Constituent Assembly. Emigrated to England after the events of August 10, 1792.

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their plans to Monsieur who, they insisted, must be kept in the background for the present, on account of his unpopularity. To this stipulation, although it appeared somewhat suspicious, King George and Mr. Pitt were not disposed to object. England had not officially recognized the Regency of Monsieur, and was under no engagements with the exiled Bourbons. They resolved, accordingly, to despatch an emissary to Switzerland to confer with M. Mounier and his associates. Lord Robert Fitzgerald, in the King's opinion, was not qualified to carry on a difficult negotiation with two French gentlemen of "superior talents." "For the business in hand," wrote His Majesty, "let Lord Grenville find some very wary man." In the meantime the strictest secrecy must be observed about the affair, which would be communicated only to the chief members of the Cabinet.¹

Lord Grenville's choice fell upon Mr. William Wickham, a close friend of his Oxford days. This gentleman was peculiarly qualified for the task it was proposed to entrust to him. He had recently carried out a very confidential correspondence to Lord Grenville's satisfaction. He held the post of Superintendent of Aliens at the Home Office, and had thus acquired an intimate knowledge of the plans and the hopes of the French *émigrés*. He was married to the daughter of a Genevese professor, and might, therefore, expect to be treated with especial consideration, should any difficulties arise in connection with his mission. Lastly, being a comparatively obscure person, his sudden departure from England would not excite comment nor attract public attention. Lord Grenville in person wrote out his instructions, which Wickham himself copied at his own house. At the Foreign Office nothing was known of his mission,² Lord

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, II. pp. 637-638.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 5-6.

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Robert Fitzgerald being forbidden to allude to him in his public despatches. All communications respecting him were to be addressed to Lord Grenville privately.¹

Wickham, in the first place, was charged to enquire closely into the nature of the assurances, which the constitutional Royalists professed to have received from the men in power in Paris. Should he be satisfied that genuine offers had been made to these gentlemen, he was empowered to point out the broad lines upon which the chief British ministers considered that a restoration might be effected. He was to be very careful, however, not to commit his government to support any definite course of action. The constitution of 1791 had been proved to be worthless, and no attempt, in Lord Grenville's opinion, should be made to re-introduce it. Louis XVII. having been proclaimed King, the Regency must be conferred upon Monsieur, whose powers in that capacity should not be unduly circumscribed. The Catholic religion must be re-established, and all laws of confiscation and proscription should be repealed. A general amnesty for political offences ought undoubtedly to be proclaimed, but the regicides might be excluded from it. These, Mr. Wickham might state confidentially, were conditions which British ministers regarded as indispensable to the re-establishment of a stable government in France.²

Furnished with these instructions, Mr. Wickham set out from London, on October 15, 1794, and arrived at Berne, on November 1. A single interview with MM. Mallet du Pan and Mounier served to convince him that matters were by no means so advanced as they had been alleged to be. M. Théodore de Lameth³ and the other constitutionalists,

¹ F. O. Switzerland 4, Grenville to Fitzgerald, October 7, 1794.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 9-15.

³ Lameth (Théodore), 1756-1854. Sat on the Right side of the Constituent Assembly. Emigrated to Switzerland.

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whom they represented, declined to meet him, on the grounds that the success of their plans would be compromised, were it to be known that they were in communication with an agent of the English government. Mr. Wickham contrived to overcome this objection, but his conference with them only confirmed his suspicion that they had greatly exaggerated the strength and the influence of their party. They proved wholly unable to adduce any tangible evidence of their relations with any prominent members of the Convention. Their story that they had received assurances of support from Tallien crumbled to pieces before a few searching questions. Approaches, it was true, had been made to the famous Madame de Fontenay,¹ profanely known as *Nôtre Dame de Thermidor*, whose message, "Coward, I am to be tried to-morrow," was supposed finally to have determined Tallien to make his onslaught upon Robespierre. But Lameth's appeal, written in sympathetic ink upon a piece of gauze, urging her to use her influence over her lover in favour of a monarchical restoration, had elicited no response.

In the course of the discussion, frequent allusions were made to La Fayette and Alexandre de Lameth,² who were at this time held in rigorous confinement by the Austrians. Furthermore, it was intimated that negotiations with the different factions in Paris would entail a large expenditure of money. In these circumstances Wickham decided that it was useless to proceed any further with the matter. The whole affair bore the appearance of an intrigue having for its object the release of La Fayette and Lameth. He,

¹ Thérèse, daughter of Cabarrus, a Spanish financier. Married the Marquis de Fontenay, 1789; divorced from him April 5, 1793. Married Tallien December 26, 1794; divorced from him April 8, 1802. Married the Prince de Chimay.

² Lameth, Alexandre (1760-1829), brother of Théodore. Famous for his opposition to Mirabeau. Followed the fortunes of La Fayette.

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consequently, declined to advance any money, and made no attempt to conceal his opinion that some deception had been practised upon his government. But, while making it very clear that he was annoyed and disappointed, he looked upon it as inadvisable to break completely with the Constitutionals. At some future time it might be convenient to resume relations with them, and, during the whole period of his stay in Switzerland, he remained, accordingly, upon friendly terms with Mallet du Pan.¹

Wickham's management of this business met with the complete approval of his government, which decided to invite him to remain in Switzerland for the present. Intelligence was difficult to obtain, and Switzerland, the only neutral country bordering upon France, was excellently situated for maintaining a correspondence with Lyons and other towns in those districts which were supposed to be disaffected. It was considered advisable, however, to give him an official position. Lord Robert Fitzgerald having expressed a wish to return home,² he was granted leave of absence, and Wickham was appointed *chargé d'affaires*, with instructions to devote his attention to the establishment of an intercourse with the interior of France. In the following July, Fitzgerald was transferred to Stockholm, and Wickham was gazetted Minister Plenipotentiary to the Helvetic Body.³

¹ F. O. Switzerland 4, Wickham to Grenville, November 13, 1797. Mallet du Pan, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 100-105.

² *Fortescue Papers*, II. p. 596. In applying for leave on July 6, 1794, he suggested that M. Mounier should act as *chargé d'affaires*.

³ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 17-18.

CHAPTER II

PITT'S GOLD

DURING the terrible winter of 1794-5 the policy of Mr. Pitt met with further reverses. On every frontier the armies of the Republic were victorious. Pichegru's starving and ragged troops invaded Holland, his cavalry achieving the unparalleled feat of capturing the Dutch fleet which was ice-bound in the Texel. On January 28, the French entered Amsterdam and were welcomed by the democratic party. The Stadt Holder, the Prince of Orange, fled, the Duke of York retreated to Bremen and, in the spring of 1795, embarked with his troops for England. Prussia, absorbed in the question of Poland, withdrew from the Coalition and, on April 5, 1795, concluded peace at Basle with the French Republic. The articles relating to the left bank of the Rhine were secret, but it was universally suspected that the Republic had obtained its coveted eastern boundary. On May 16, Holland not only made peace, but allied herself with France against England. Spain, meanwhile, was negotiating secretly and, on July 22, a treaty of peace was signed at Basle between His Most Catholic Majesty and the French Republic.

Holland having been revolutionized and having passed under French influence, the English government had to select another field for operations against revolutionary France. Material assistance, it was resolved, should be given to the Royalists of Brittany

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and La Vendée. In point of fact this measure had been under consideration before the retreat of the Duke of York and Pichegru's conquest of the Netherlands. In the month of July, 1794, the Old Whigs, having broken with Mr. Fox, joined forces with the ministerialists. Pitt's position was thus greatly strengthened, but, in the future conduct of the war, he was obliged to adopt to some extent the views of his new supporters. Inspired by Edmund Burke, the Whig seceders maintained that the French Royalists should be assisted to overthrow the Republic. They deprecated colonial expeditions and contended that England should devote her full strength to restoring the monarchy in France, the only solution which could give peace to Europe. It was in deference to their opinions that an ardent Royalist, Mr. William Windham, the friend of Johnson and of Burke, was appointed Secretary at War and given control of all matters relating to the *émigrés*. The new minister, assisted by the Comte de Puisaye, began at once to draw up plans for sending succour upon a large scale to the insurgents in the west of France.

Pitt's schemes for the prosecution of the campaign of 1795 were not, however, limited to the expedition it was proposed to send to the coast of Brittany. A convention was concluded, on May 4, 1795, whereby England undertook to guarantee the interest of an Austrian loan and the Emperor in return engaged actively to employ 200,000 men upon the Rhine.¹ Furthermore, it was resolved to place the Prince de Condé's army in a position to take the field with effect. This unfortunate contingent of militant *émigrés* was attached to the Austrian army of the Rhine. But the Court of Vienna only devoted the altogether inadequate sum of 20,000 florins a month to its maintenance. The Royalists had consequently

¹ *Annual Register*, 1795, p. 161.

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suffered cruelly during the winter. Desertion had thinned their ranks, and the little efficiency which they had acquired had been sorely impaired. It would have been contrary to the policy of Austria to have allowed them to figure prominently in any campaign, seeing that it was her intention to obtain territorial compensation from France. But, were a monarchical restoration to take place, it might be advantageous to be able to claim that by incorporating the Royalist corps into her army she had saved it from complete extinction. Hence Austria declined England's proposal that Condé's people should pass into the British service. It was not possible, however, to object when England expressed her intention of clothing and equipping them and of supplying their many pressing needs at her own expense.¹

Colonel Charles Craufurd² was, accordingly, despatched to the Prince de Condé to impart to him the pleasing intelligence that the British government had resolved to expend £140,000 for the purpose of rendering his little army effective.³ The colonel had been attached to the Imperial headquarters during the campaign in Holland and, in addition to carrying out his mission to the Prince de Condé, he was now directed to act as British commissioner with the Austrian army of the Rhine. In this double capacity he was to be assisted by his more famous brother, Robert, the future commander of the Light Division. His instructions prescribed that, immediately upon his arrival, he was to place himself in communication with Wickham, whom he was to supply with money to a practically unlimited extent. In his original

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, III. pp. 18-19. F. O. Army in Germany 5; Grenville to Craufurd, May 22, 1795. F. O. Switzerland 6, Wickham to Grenville, April 16, 1795.

² Afterwards Lieut.-General Sir Charles Craufurd, G.C.B. Married the widow of third Duke of Newcastle.

³ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 49-51.

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instructions £30,000 had been specified as the sum which he might advance to that gentleman, but, in a subsequent despatch, Lord Grenville desired him to comply with all his demands, "even beyond the amount mentioned in his instructions."¹

Mr. Wickham had been diligently devoting himself to the task of acquiring information about the condition of affairs in France. His diplomatic duties took up but little of his time and served merely to mask his incessant activity in other directions. Along the Swiss frontier and, generally, throughout south-eastern France there existed, he discovered, considerable hostility to the Republic and an intense desire for peace. But the agents, whom he directed to mix and converse with the country people on market days, reported that they heard no sentiments expressed in favour of a restoration of the monarchy. The rural population appeared "not so much to dislike royalty as to have forgotten all about it and to have lost sight of everything but the Convention."² From Lyons, however, the news was of a more encouraging character. One of his first acts had been to place himself in communication with M. de Précý, who had conducted the defence of the city, when it had revolted against the Convention. He was now in the Sardinian service and readily agreed to give Wickham the benefit of his advice and experience. In his opinion, and he was not only one of the most devoted and intrepid of the militant Royalists but was, in addition, a sensible and cool-headed man, Lyons was very favourably disposed. But, after its terrible experience at the hands of Fouché and Collot-d'Herbois, it could not be expected to rise except in conjunction with powerful support from without. Let relations, he counselled, be established with the chief Royalists in the town,

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 5, Grenville to Craufurd, June 8, 1795.

² F. O. Switzerland 4, Wickham to Grenville, December 10, 1794.

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who should be supplied with arms and with money. But let the signal for the outbreak be deferred until the Austrians should cross the Rhine and until Condé should be in a position to enter Franche-Comté at the head of his army.¹ Précý's plan, when submitted to London, was approved of by the government,² and it was upon the lines he had suggested that Wickham and Craufurd were directed to act.

For purposes of communication with Lyons, Précý recommended the employment of a young engineer, named Bayard, who had served under him during the siege. Bayard made no difficulties about entering Wickham's service and, henceforward, constantly performed the many dangerous tasks which were entrusted to him with courage and ability. About this same time, also, Wickham took into his employ a Chevalier d'Artès,³ a former naval officer, who had attracted the favourable notice of Mr. Windham by a plan which he had submitted to him for encouraging desertion in the French army. The chief clerical work in connection with espionage and kindred business appears to have been carried out by a certain Le Clerc,⁴ who had been employed to procure intelligence by the Duke of York in Holland. For his correspondence and communications with the Prince de Condé Wickham enlisted the services of M. de la Tour, who had held a post in the administration of Franche-Comté under the Monarchy.⁵ Lastly, to assist him in the general business of his mission, Lord Grenville, early in May, 1795, sent out to him "a young man

¹ F. O. Switzerland 5, Wickham to Grenville, March 28, 1795. *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 56-62.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 34-35.

³ *Ibid.*, I. pp. 25-27. *Fortescue Papers*, III. pp. 18-19. *Windham Papers*, I. pp. 284-285.

⁴ Le Clerc received 18 *louis* a month. F. O. Switzerland 17, Wickham to Grenville, May 14, 1796 (private and separate).

⁵ F. O. Switzerland 5, Wickham to Grenville, March 30, 1795.

belonging to his office, named Flint,¹ who bore the character of much diligence and intelligence.”²

Besides establishing his agents all along the south-eastern frontier of France and maintaining a correspondence with Lyons, Wickham sent emissaries to Paris and entered into relations with the *Chouan* leaders in the west. He had been especially enjoined to seek every opportunity and to grudge no expense in gaining over any part of the enemy's army and in undermining the loyalty of republican officials.³ His first effort, however, to carry out on a large scale this part of his instructions was most unsuccessful. By the help of Le Clerc,⁴ as it would seem, he had entered into relations at Paris with a certain Vincent, who, under the old *régime*, had been on the staff of the post-office. This individual professed to have suborned several minor officials in various government departments and to have established an understanding with Tallien and other prominent persons. For several weeks he buoyed up Wickham with the hope that a *coup d'état* in favour of the monarchy was imminent. It was in respect of this affair that Grenville had directed Craufurd to advance any sum of money that might be required. But it was soon evident that Vincent's stories were altogether unreliable. In Wickham's opinion he had been imposed upon and had not wilfully deceived him.⁵ Be that as it may, however, Wickham was forced to admit that he had been completely deluded, and that the £1,200 expended in the affair must be looked upon as lost.⁶

¹ Flint, Charles William (1777-1834), afterwards secretary of Irish Office in London. Knighted 1812.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 39.

³ *Ibid.*, I. p. 26.

⁴ The correspondence appears to have been always addressed to Le Clerc. It was certainly deciphered and copied out by him.

⁵ F. O. Switzerland 6. Wickham to Grenville, April 29, May 15, May 20, June 4, June 16, 1795. *Fortescue Papers*, III. p. 95.

⁶ F. O. Switzerland 17, Wickham to Grenville, May 14, 1796. “The Vincent correspondence cost about £1200.”

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Although this episode displays Wickham in a somewhat foolish light, it would be a mistake to imagine that he was, as a rule, either stupid or unduly credulous. The times, it must be remembered, were extraordinary, and no man could say what the morrow would bring forth. In the spring and early summer of 1795, when Vincent was deluding him with the prospect that a monarchical restoration was imminent, Paris was in a most restless condition. On the 12 *germinal*, and again, on the 1 *prairial*, revolutionary *journées* were organized, the Convention was invaded, and the *Thermidoreans* were obliged to declare a state of siege, and invoke the aid of Pichegru to crush the survivors of the *Montagnard* party. Wickham's reports on the condition of France at this period show great discernment. He judged the situation correctly, when he asserted that the people as a whole were disgusted with misgovernment and anarchy and were tired of war. Nor was he blind to the other side of the picture. He could perceive clearly that the Bourbon princes were unpopular, and that the *émigrés* were even more hated than the *terrorists*.¹ His mistake consisted in his inability to draw the right deductions from his facts. Like the vast majority of his contemporaries he failed to understand that the revolution was an essentially national movement, and that the Bourbons, because they were in league with the enemies of France, would never willingly be accepted by her. He could perceive that some great change was impending, and that France desired a strong government, but it was not in his philosophy to realize that the restoration of the Bourbons was the one solution of the question which could not be effected.

At the time when Wickham was thus compelled to acknowledge that he had been the dupe either of a fool

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 116.



THE RT. HON. WILLIAM WICKHAM

From a photograph of a picture painted at Vienna in 1801, prefixed to his "Correspondence from 1794;" published in 1870

or an intriguer, he was considering the possibility of detaching from the republican cause an even more important person than Tallien. At the end of June, 1795, he was not without hope that it might be feasible to gain over to the service of the monarchy the conqueror of Holland, the most distinguished of the revolutionary generals, the newly appointed commander of the army of the Rhine and the Moselle. Among the despatches of the Duke of York, during the campaign in Holland, are two papers, evidently furnished him by his intelligence department, on the subject of General Pichegru.¹ In the first, dated Tournai, May 23, 1794, the victor of Turcoing is spoken of as a man of "eminent talents, strong, active, and a true *sans-culottes*. The Convention," the writer² goes on to say, "reposes with good reason the utmost confidence in him. It should, therefore, be the business of the allies to make him an object of suspicion to that assembly. In the second document, dated May 28, and stated to have been drawn up by a French staff officer captured at Menin, Pichegru is described as a man of universally acknowledged ability. "The chances," runs the report, "of tampering with him successfully are small, nevertheless the attempt might be worth making. He is reserved and thoughtful, rarely laughs, and appears always to be meditating new plans and combinations. He is no great talker, but his observations are invariably to the point. He has a broad face, highly coloured cheeks, and an aquiline nose. His countenance is stern, and his general appearance is commanding and eminently soldier-like."

Charles Pichegru was born at Arbois in Franche-

¹ W. O. 1/169.

² It is not improbable that the writer was the Comte de Montgailard, who was at this time in communication with the Duke of York. Both it and the report of May 28 appear to have been copied by Le Clerc.

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Comté in February, 1761, and was, consequently, in his thirty-fifth year when he was appointed to the command of the Army of the Rhine. His parents belonged to the peasant class. Nevertheless, in spite of his humble origin, he received a good education, and, on leaving school, expressed a wish to enter a Franciscan monastic order. His novitiate was performed at the college of Brienne, where he taught mathematics, and numbered among his pupils the young Napoleon Bonaparte. But, having in this manner completed his period of probation, he elected to abandon the monastic for a military career. In 1780, he enlisted in the artillery, and nine years later was promoted sergeant-major, the highest rank to which, under the old *régime*, a *roturier* could hope to attain. All these barriers, however, were removed by the revolution which made Pichegru's fortune, as it did those of many others in his position. In 1792, he was a brigadier-general, and, in the following year, commanded a division, and co-operated with Hoche in expelling the Prussians from Alsace. In 1794, at the head of the army of the north, he drove the allies from the Low Countries, and conquered Holland for the Republic. In the spring of 1795, after putting down in Paris the insurrection, known as that of the 12 *germinal* of the year III, he proceeded to Alsace to assume his new command upon the Rhine. In his letter of service it was notified that, were the armies of the north and of Sambre and Meuse to be united to that of the Rhine, the supreme command would devolve upon him. This was the history of the man whom Wickham now proposed to seduce from his allegiance to the Republic.

Reports had reached Wickham which made him doubt whether this soldier of the Revolution were a true friend of the Republic. Soon after his first arrival in Switzerland, while he was still in an

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unofficial position, he had learnt that, in 1792, Pichegru had confided to the citizen Vincent, who commanded the national guard of Pontarlier, that he disliked republican institutions, and regretted the abolition of the old *régime*.¹ More recent intelligence had tended only to confirm the truth of this story. It had not escaped observation that in Holland Pichegru had invariably treated any *émigré*, who might happen to fall into his power, with marked consideration. While in the Low Countries and while in Paris, at the time of the insurrection of *germinal*, he was said to have allowed certain expressions to escape him indicative of his contempt for the Jacobins.² Since his arrival at the headquarters of his command, upon the Rhine, spies reported that he was plainly indignant at the neglect of the Convention to minister to the wants of his army.³ Lastly, Lord Grenville transmitted from London a story, for the truth of which, however, he was unable to vouch, that, at a recent meeting between Hardenburg and Pichegru, the necessity of a monarchical restoration had been discussed, and that the general had invited the Prussian diplomatist to convey his views on the subject to his Royal master.⁴

The intelligence received by Wickham of Pichegru's dissatisfaction was in the main correct. It is certain that when he assumed the command of the army of the Rhine, he was no longer, if, indeed, he ever had been, a true servant of the Republic. His hatred of democratic institutions may have been fostered by his semi-clerical education, and his training in the Royal army, but it appears to have been largely instinctive. Three years later, under the date of October 24, 1798, Windham⁵ has recorded in his diary the impression

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, March 8, 1797.

² *Fortescue Papers*, III. pp. 60, 61.

³ F. O. Switzerland 6, Wickham to Grenville, April 29, 1795.

⁴ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 85-86.

⁵ *Windham Papers*, XXIV. B.M. add. 37,865.

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left upon his mind by a long conversation with him. "At the mention of the word republic," writes Windham, "he grew warm, and, although naturally of a sedate demeanour, started from his seat, and said he would maintain in argument against the most determined republican that there could be no good executive administration, but what proceeded from a single man." Without doubt, however, there were other reasons than a seemingly inborn repulsion to popular government, which, in this summer of 1795, converted the successful general into a conspirator. Like many others he was convinced that the Republic could not endure, and he was, accordingly, led to consider the position in which he would stand, were another *régime* to be established. To the Republic he owed his rank and his honours, but every day tended only to confirm his opinion that, in order to retain them, the form of government, under which he had acquired them, must be destroyed. He was confident that before long some soldier would overthrow the discredited Jacobin oligarchy in Paris and proclaim the King. Being thus convinced that a restoration of the monarchy was the inevitable outcome of the situation, he was necessarily led to wonder whether he could not himself carry it out. Availing himself of his *prestige* and his popularity, why should not he declare for his lawful sovereign, and be remembered in history as the great soldier who, to save his country from further misgovernment, had elected to follow in the footsteps of General Monk?

It may be surmised that ideas of this description were beginning to take shape in Pichegru's mind when, in the spring of 1795, he set out from Paris for Alsace. The condition of affairs, which he must have observed on his journey, was not calculated to diminish his growing hostility to the Republic. On every side he must have seen that business was at a standstill,

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and that the misery of the people was intense. The law, he must have realized, was powerless to deal with the deserters and the marauders who terrorized the countryside. At every stage he was, doubtless, greeted with terrible stories of the deeds of the *chauffeurs*, so-called from their practice of holding their victims over a fire to make them disclose the whereabouts of their treasure. Nor, when he reached his destination, were these gloomy impressions likely to be removed by the aspect of his army. Whether he were inspecting a fortress, or visiting his troops in their cantonments, he was confronted always by regiments thinned by sickness and desertion, by squadrons and batteries without horses, by magazines depleted of stores. At headquarters his military chest was empty, and to all his appeals for money the committee returned the invariable answer that the Republic had no gold at its disposal. But it had always one palliative to suggest. Let the citizen general cross the Rhine and replenish his coffers and revictual his troops in the dominions of the Empire.¹

Of all the difficulties with which Pichegru was called upon to contend the total lack of *specie* was infinitely the most serious. In the frontier provinces the paper money of the Republic was practically valueless. In April, reported Wickham, the bakers in Alsace openly refused to accept payments in *assignats*, and at Lyons, in the same month, a *louis d'or* sold for 225 *livres*.² Officers and men suffered cruelly under the inability of the central government to furnish them with even a portion of their pay in hard coin. The commander-in-chief himself was in no better circumstances than his subordinates. Soon after his arrival in Alsace, Pichegru, in order to defray his daily expenses, was obliged to sell two favourite

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 7.

² *Fortescue Papers*, III. p. 82.

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chargers, and, but for the fact that his friend General Moreau was enabled to repay him an old loan of 50 *louis*, he would have been reduced to the most humiliating straits.¹

It is evident that, when Pichegru assumed the command of the Army of the Rhine, he was no longer content, as he had been in his earlier campaigns, to live on the modest ration of the soldier. But a more serious accusation has been brought against him. It has been said that he was demoralized by the wealth of Holland, and that the frugal republican general of former days was now a slave to wine and to women.² If this allegation be true, that he had given way to habits of intemperance, it is certainly very strange that there should be no allusion to it in the voluminous correspondence of Wickham and his agents. A hundred years ago, even in the French army, drinking to excess was far more common than it is to-day. Had Wickham learnt that on some particular occasion Pichegru had exceeded the bounds of strict sobriety, he might very well have looked upon it as so trivial an occurrence as to be unworthy of mention. But, if the commander of the Army of the Rhine were really an habitually hard drinker, Wickham must have been aware of it, and he assuredly would not have concealed so interesting a piece of news from Lord Grenville. Nor is there any reference to be found, either in his letters or despatches, to Pichegru's relations with women. According to the gossip of the time, he is supposed to have had two mistresses at this period. One was a Madame Salomon, a Jewess, whose country house was in the neighbourhood of his headquarters at Illkirch.³ He, undoubtedly, visited

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 20-21; E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, pp. 27-28.

² A. Sorel, *L'Europe et la Revolution*, IV. p. 413.

³ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 21.

her frequently, but whatever the nature of his friendship for her may have been, there would seem to be no grounds for supposing that it exercised any influence over his political actions or opinions. Madame Lajolais, the wife of a general officer serving under him, was the other woman who was alleged to have been his mistress, and, with regard to her, the report may very probably have been correct. Both the Vicomte d'Osmond, Madame de Boigne's father, and General Kellermann are said to have preceded him in the enjoyment of her favours.¹ Her husband bore a most indifferent character, and appears to have been content to play the part of the *mari complaisant*.² It is very possible that Pichegru's impatience at the penury and discomfort to which he was reduced was aggravated by his intimacy with this needy and disreputable couple.

Wickham had never intended himself to make overtures to General Pichegru. His proposals, he felt sure, would be more likely to meet with a favourable reception, were they to be made by the Prince de Condé. It would seem that the question of sounding the new commander of the Army of the Rhine had been mooted between them, as far back as the month of May. Wickham, however, at that time was immersed in business connected with the Royalist insurrection which was preparing at Lyons, and was, moreover, still full of hope that Tallien was about to pronounce himself in favour of a monarchical restoration. But, in July, on receipt of Grenville's letter, relating the conversation which Pichegru was supposed to have had with Hardenburg, he resolved to take up the affair seriously. Both he and Craufurd strongly urged His Serene Highness to embark upon the negotiation without delay, undertaking to supply

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 44.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

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whatever money might be necessary to bring the matter to a successful issue. Wickham seems to have suggested that either some Swiss officer or the Chevalier d'Artès¹ should be employed to convey the actual proposals into France. But he raised no objections when the Prince expressed a strong desire himself to select his agent,² intimating that his choice would probably fall upon one of his own officers. A short time before this resolution was taken, the young Louis XVII. had died in the Temple, and, on June 15, 1795, Monsieur, his uncle, had been proclaimed King in Condé's camp at Müllheim. Condé was well aware that he was regarded with no little jealousy at the exiled Court of Verona.³ Before embarking upon the negotiation he was, therefore, careful to lay the whole matter before his lawful sovereign, and it was not until July 26, that, having been empowered to promise the necessary pardon and rewards, he sent for his agent and directed him to endeavour to establish communications with General Pichegru.⁴

Ever since the outbreak of the revolution and the general war, Switzerland had been overrun with French *émigrés*, and cosmopolitan refugees of all kinds. Moreover, the treaty of peace which France had recently concluded at Basle with Prussia, and the negotiations actually in progress with Spain had brought into the country a host of political intriguers, spies and diplomatic agents. But, among the many needy and unscrupulous adventurers to be found, during this summer of 1795, upon the territory of the Swiss Republic, there was no man more unprincipled and venal than the Comte de Montgaillard, to whom

¹ F. O. Switzerland 12 and 20, Wickham to Grenville, November 2, 1795, March 8, 1797.

² F. O. Army in Germany 5, Craufurd to Grenville, July 6, 1795.

³ F. O. Army in Germany 5, Craufurd to Grenville, August 12, 1795.

⁴ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 42.

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the Prince de Condé was resolved to entrust the delicate task of making advances to General Pichegru.

Jean Maurice Rocques may have had some right to call himself de Montgaillard, but his assumption of the title of Count would appear to have been altogether unwarranted. He was born in 1761 in Languedoc, in which province his father owned and farmed a small estate. After leaving the college of Sorrèze, where he showed himself an apt scholar, Jean Maurice entered the army. At the conclusion of the peace, however, in 1783, he severed his connection with a career for which he had no vocation and devoted himself to the study of the economic and social questions which, in these last days of the old *régime*, were already beginning to absorb universal attention. At the time of the meeting of the States-General, he appears to have been admitted to the conferences of such men as Barrère and the Abbé Siéyès and to have collaborated in the political writings of Rivarol and Champcenetz. The regeneration of France, however, was not the only object of his thoughts. During these years he is believed to have carried out successfully some profitable speculations, and, at the same time, to have been entrusted with more than one confidential mission by Louis XVI. But, after the events of August 10, 1792, he seems to have abandoned the Court and to have transferred his allegiance to the popular party. Little, however, is known about him at this period of his career. On September 20, 1792, he unquestionably paid a short visit to England. The reasons which induced him to quit France on this occasion have never been discovered. Talleyrand, however, was his fellow passenger on the boat, and it has been suggested that he had been commissioned by Barrère and Danton to watch the ex-bishop, who was proceeding on a diplomatic mission to London. Having completed the business, whatever it may have been, which

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had taken him to England, Montgaillard returned quietly to France and lived unmolested in Paris during the greater part of the Reign of Terror, notwithstanding that his name had been inscribed upon the list of *émigrés*.

According to his own story, his life was in grave danger in May, 1794, and he was compelled to fly. But this explanation of his departure from Paris and of his journey to the Low Countries rests entirely upon his own assertion. The sudden arrival at the outposts of the allies of a man who had escaped from revolutionary Paris aroused a curiosity which Montgaillard was very ready to satisfy. The Emperor Francis II. conversed with him, he alleges, for two hours at the Imperial headquarters at Tournai, and the Duke of York urged him to go to London in order that his government might have the benefit of his advice upon the condition of affairs. This last statement was perfectly true. Although certain ugly rumours respecting the man had reached his ears, the Duke granted him an interview and found him a person "of superior abilities, apparently well informed about the situation in France, especially about La Vendée." He, consequently, desired him to go to England without, however, accepting any responsibility for him. It was for ministers, wrote His Royal Highness, to determine in their wisdom the degree of credence which should be attached to his information.¹

Montgaillard, however, discovered upon his arrival that King George's ministers were greatly prejudiced against him. It was in vain that he emitted the most Royalist opinions and that in a pamphlet, entitled *The State of France in May, 1794*, he denounced the Revolution with unmeasured violence: he could not remove the suspicion from their minds that he was a spy of the Convention. Rumours which had preceded him

¹ W. O. 1/169, Duke of York to Dundas, June 3, 1794.

to England assumed a more concrete shape. Malouet, who had the ear of Lord Grenville, appears to have given him the worst of characters. In spite of all his appeals to be allowed to remain, Montgaillard, in August, 1794, was ordered to leave England without further delay.¹

Montgaillard, after his expulsion from England, appears to have been genuinely afraid of returning to France. If it be the case that he had been an agent of Robespierre, he may very well have considered that his life would not be safe in his own country after the downfall of his patron. On the other hand his story may be true that, in May, 1794, he had incurred the displeasure of the Committee of Public Safety and that, in consequence, he had been compelled to quit Paris in haste. It is very possible that while in Belgium and in England he may not have been in the employ of either Robespierre or anybody else. Perhaps he was merely an adventurer ready to serve, but no less ready to betray, any cause or any party. After a brief stay in Holland he moved on to Germany and, about the end of 1794, decided to proceed to Switzerland. At Bruchsal, while upon the road, he was recognized by an old schoolfellow, who suggested that he should pay his respects to the Prince de Condé, whose army was in winter quarters at Rottenburg. Montgaillard required no pressing. He interrupted his journey and, on January 15, 1795, was presented to His Serene Highness.² No awkward rumours about his relations with the Jacobinical faction in Paris would appear to have reached the Prince's headquarters.

¹ F. O. France 43, Grenville to Malouet, May, 1794; Montgaillard to Grenville, 10 juillet, 1794. H. O. I. Aliens, 1794, Montgaillard to Portland, 5 Aout., 1794. *Windham Papers*, B.M. Add. 37,856, Montgaillard to Windham, 14 juillet, 1794.

² C. de Lacroix, *Souvenirs de Montgaillard*, pp. 23-28.

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The Prince de Condé was neither a great general nor a man of any political sagacity, but it can be said of him, as it can of his son, the Duc de Bourbon, and of his grandson, the ill-fated Duc d'Enghien, that they were always ready to share with their followers the hardships and perils of the field. Montgaillard, at this, his first interview with the Prince, contrived to make a most favourable impression. Yet his personal appearance must have been rather repulsive than attractive. He was short in stature; one of his shoulders was slightly higher than the other, and his face was that of a Portuguese Jew.¹ But men of his type are keen judges of character and very quickly discover how an influence may be established over the person they desire to captivate. Condé, at this time, was in terrible want of money, and Montgaillard seems to have persuaded him of his ability to assist him in raising a loan. The man was unquestionably clever, an excellent talker, and had, moreover, been engaged in stock-exchange speculations. The sorely harassed Prince listened and, without doubt, was dazzled by his visitor's knowledge of financial matters and by the names of the bankers with whom he professed to be able to transact business. All through the winter he seems to have been convinced that Montgaillard was on the point of obtaining for him a large sum of money.² But, although his expectations were never realized, his belief and trust in him were in no way diminished. Before he could be undeceived, the welcome news arrived that England had decided to supplement his Austrian allowance and that his financial distress was to be relieved.

Montgaillard's cupidity was keenly aroused by this new development. He saw Craufurd prepared to spare no expense to place Condé's army upon a respectable

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Memoires*, I. pp. 206-207.

² *Ibid.*, I. pp. 194-198.

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footing, while Wickham, he was informed, was simply pouring gold into Lyons and Franche-Comté. It had soon been bruited abroad that the British government purposed to foment insurrections in south-eastern France. From Hamburg to Basle, at every inn and every tavern frequented by the *émigrés*, the matter was freely discussed. The indiscretion of the Royalists and their inability to keep a secret was one of the chief difficulties with which Wickham had to contend.¹ There is good reason to think that it was Montgaillard who first suggested to Condé the expediency of attempting to effect an understanding with Pichegru. It is impossible to say whether he had any grounds for supposing that the general's fidelity to the Republic was shaken. The negotiation, however, whatever the outcome of it might be, would need to be supported with money, and he may, therefore, have proposed it solely as a means whereby some of Pitt's gold might be transferred to his own pockets. But in order to have the handling of the money, the conduct of the business must be entrusted to him, and Wickham, he knew well, would strongly object to his employment in any capacity whatever. That gentleman had held the office of superintendent of aliens at the very time when Montgaillard had been ordered to leave England and, if he had not himself recommended it, must necessarily be well aware of the reasons which had moved the British government to decree his expulsion. Consequently, when Condé sent for him and offered to place the management of the affair in his hands, he expressed his readiness to undertake the negotiation, provided that Wickham were not admitted into the secret. He was profoundly distrustful, he declared, of England, and was convinced that she had no other object in view than to weaken and dismember

¹ F. O. Switzerland 6 and 7, Wickham to Grenville, April 26, 1795; Wickham to Grenville, May 10, 1795.

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France. Nor would it be prudent, he insisted, at this early stage of the business, to inform the Austrians of the negotiations it was proposed to set on foot.¹ Condé agreed to these conditions with the intention, presumably, of breaking them, should Pichegru show any disposition to respond to his overtures.

To enter France, proceed to the headquarters of a general of the Republic and suggest to him that he should betray the government he was serving, was an enterprise involving more risk than Montgaillard was prepared to incur. He fully intended to keep the control of the negotiation in his own hands as far as possible; but he purposed to direct the operations of his agents from the secure haven of neutral territory. Before receiving Condé's final instructions, he had already selected the men he proposed to employ. At Neufchatel, which was in the curious position of being both a Swiss Canton and a dependency of Prussia, there lived a printer and bookseller of the name of Fauche-Borel. He had always been a pronounced enemy of revolutionary and democratic ideas and was never tired of proclaiming his attachment to monarchical institutions. Nor was he content merely to express in words his admiration for Kings and aristocracies. To assist the good cause he would often print and publish at his own expense anti-revolutionary pamphlets; and it was in connection with business of this kind that Montgaillard had made his acquaintance. One visit to the shop of the Royalist bookseller sufficed to reveal to him the manner of man he was. Fauche, he saw at once, was a genuine enthusiast, but at the same time, a very vain and not over-scrupulous person, consumed with the ambition of playing a part in some important negotiation. Were this wish to be gratified, Montgaillard felt sure

¹ Montgaillard, *Mémoire concernant*, etc., Paris, 1804; Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 218-222.

that no danger would deter him from carrying out his mission to the best of his ability.

When it was confided to him that an attempt was to be made to win over General Pichegru, and that it was proposed to allow him to participate in the negotiation, Fauche's joy was unbounded. He unhesitatingly declared his readiness to abandon his business and to devote his whole time and energy to the prosecution of the affair. But, as he was without experience in matters of this kind, Montgaillard decided to associate with him a certain Courant, another native of Neufchatel, who had formerly been a spy of Frederick the Great. Fauche-Borel and Courant, it was arranged, were to enter France and seek to obtain an interview with Pichegru. Their reports were to be sent to Montgaillard, who would forward them to Condé. On July 29, 1795, accordingly, the three men parted company at Basle. While the chief agent remained behind in Switzerland, the two subordinates crossed the frontier and drove to Strasburg.¹ They carried with them fifty English half-sovereigns and seventy-five Austrian ducats. Should they contrive to convey to Pichegru a message from Condé, 1,000 *louis* were to be their reward.²

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 223-231.

² G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 42-43.

CHAPTER III

SECRET SERVICE

THE plans of the British government for the prosecution of the campaign of 1795 were of a far-reaching character. A large force of *émigrés* was to be raised and equipped in England and conveyed to the coast of Brittany. In order to meet this attack, the Republic would be compelled to detach troops from its eastern and southern frontiers and thus the Austrians would be enabled to assume the offensive in Alsace under very favourable conditions. The passage of the Rhine by the Imperial armies was to be the signal for Condé, with his re-organized contingent, to enter Franche-Comté, where-upon Lyons, which Wickham had been so busy in supplying with arms and with money, would declare for the King and rise in rebellion against the Convention. Lastly, in conjunction with these various operations, an Austro-Sardinian army from Piedmont would cross the mountains and invade Savoy. But it was not in the power of Mr. Pitt himself to direct the forces which he purposed to set in motion. In theory his plans were very formidable, but in practice they depended for success upon the harmonious co-operation of allies whose interests diverged and of political parties which distrusted each other. At the end of July, when the most favourable season for military operations was already half spent, the Austrians were still inactive and widely scattered along the right bank of the Rhine.

It was to enable Austria to abandon her defensive

attitude and prosecute the campaign with vigour that England had come to her financial assistance. In these circumstances the prolonged immobility of her armies called forth strong remonstrance from the British government. Once the ill-fated Royalist expedition to Brittany had set sail from Southampton, it was a matter of urgent necessity that the attention of the French armies upon the Rhine should be fully occupied. But neither the protests of the ambassador, Sir Morton Eden, at Vienna, nor the angry complaints which Craufurd¹ was directed to address personally to the Austrian generals could induce the Imperial Cabinet to allow the much-needed diversion to be attempted. By the treaty of January 3, 1795, with Russia, Austria had secured for herself a share in the plunder of Poland. Furthermore, the two Courts had come to an understanding in the delicate matter of their respective designs upon Turkey, Bavaria and Venice. Nevertheless, Thugut, the Austrian chancellor, had been greatly disturbed by the peace which Prussia had concluded with the French Republic. He was haunted by the fear that, should the Imperial armies become involved in serious operations in Alsace, Prussia would seize the opportunity of invading Bohemia. It was this apprehension about the intentions ascribed to the Court of Berlin which, in spite of the remonstrances of England, kept the Austrians inactive upon the Rhine.

At the beginning of August, 1795, several important conferences were held in Condé's camp at Müllheim between Wickham, Craufurd and the Austrian general, Bellegarde. True to the promise extracted from him by Montgaillard, Condé studiously refrained from any allusion to the measures upon which he was engaged for establishing a correspondence with Pichegru. The effect of that general's

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 5, Grenville to Craufurd, July 24, 1795. *Fortescue Papers*, III. p. 91.

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defection was, consequently, not considered and the military situation alone was the subject of discussion. Recent communications with St. Petersburg, respecting the designs of Prussia, had tended to reassure Austria.¹ Being somewhat less fearful of attack by her German rival, she was now more disposed to assume, upon a limited scale, the offensive against the French Republic. These deliberations at Müllheim, however, brought out clearly the fundamental difference existing between the British and the Austrian policy. England was waging war in order to re-establish the *status quo ante bellum* in Europe. This end, her statesmen conceived, could be best effected by a restoration of the ancient monarchy. The Bourbons, once they were back in France, would, it was calculated, agree readily to evacuate the Low Countries and to abandon the other conquests of the Revolution. Hence it was the policy of England to encourage Royalist insurrections and to expend her money freely in creating internal difficulties for the Republic. It was in order that Condé's army might be prominently employed in the forthcoming campaign that she had taken in hand its reorganization. In Wickham's opinion an Austrian invasion of France, unless the Royalists participated in it, would tend rather to defeat than to advance the cause which England desired to promote.²

Territorial expansion, on the other hand, was Austria's sole object in prosecuting the war, and the Court of Vienna was very far from considering that its particular interests would be served by a restoration of the monarchy. In spite of the victories of the revolutionary armies, democratic institutions were still regarded as incompatible with military strength, and Austrian statesmen were, therefore, in no way disposed to exert themselves to overthrow a form of

¹ A. Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution*, LV. pp. 403, 404.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, L. pp. 122 and 137.

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government which, in their opinion, could only tend to weaken their formidable neighbour. But, different as was the standpoint from which the war was regarded at Vienna and in London, both Courts were equally resolved not to recognize officially the sovereignty of Louis XVIII. It is not surprising that Austria, should have been unwilling to take a step calculated to increase the *prestige* and the dignity of the exiled King at Verona. But the reasons which induced Pitt to recommend the adoption of the same policy are not so obvious. It is plain, however, that the advantages to be derived from the acknowledgment of Louis XVIII. were more apparent than real. It would unquestionably be very gratifying to that monarch and his immediate followers, but there were no grounds for supposing that it would increase the number of his adherents in the interior of France. Moreover, it was always possible, although not very probable, that some new form of government might be set up in France which might be willing to agree to the terms upon which England was prepared to make peace. In that case a settlement would be rendered more difficult by the fact that the Court of St. James' had officially recognized the Bourbon King. Lastly, Mr. Pitt had his parliamentary position to consider. Mr. Fox and his friends would certainly denounce the acknowledgment of Louis XVIII. as an unwarrantable interference in the internal affairs of another country, and would accuse the government of carrying on the war in the interests of a fallen dynasty.

Nevertheless, after the successful landing of the Royalist expedition in the Bay of Quiberon, Mr. Pitt resolved to establish a confidential intercourse with the exiled King. Wickham and all those who had studied the question closely were convinced that the royal cause had suffered the greatest injury from the intemperate language of the *émigrés*. It was constantly

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upon their lips that, when the King should return to France, the men who had not emigrated must be sent to the gallows and the women be whipped by the common hangman.¹ It was clearly most important that Louis XVIII. should issue a declaration of a nature to counteract the alarm which threats of this kind could not fail to arouse. It was, therefore, decided to send an emissary to Verona to impress upon the King the necessity of reassuring the great mass of Frenchmen by disavowing, in some public proclamation, the revengeful intentions imputed to him by his followers. Lord Macartney, to whom the task was entrusted, received his instructions on July 10, 1795, and at once proceeded to his destination. His despatches,² during his two months' stay at Verona, are interesting by reason of the faithful description to be found in them of the life at the exiled Court. But his mission served no useful purpose beyond that of affording British ministers an insight into the character and views of the King. The object, which it had been hoped to achieve, had been defeated before he could reach Verona.

Louis XVIII. had been considering the manner in which he should announce his accession, and the news that an agent of the British government was on his way to Verona, decided him to issue his manifesto without further delay.³ His address to the French people was couched in temperate language, but it contained none of those reassuring statements which the British government would have wished to see inserted. The King, indeed, promised to pardon and forget the errors of his misguided subjects. But mercy

¹ E. Daudet, *Histoire de l'Émigration*, I. p. 285.

² They are to be found in F. O. France 44. Many of them have been published by M. A. Lebon in his work, *L'Angleterre et l'Émigration Française*.

³ F. O. Switzerland 11, Wickham to Grenville, August 19, 1795.

and justice, he reminded them, must go hand in hand. The laws must be observed and the royal clemency could not, therefore, be extended to notable miscreants such as the regicides. Nor was any hope held out that institutions would be modified in accordance with the more Liberal spirit of the age. The old *régime*, or, as the King was pleased to call it, the ancient constitution, must be restored intact. Certain abuses, however, had crept into it, and these, it would be His Majesty's first care to eradicate.¹ In no part of this too lengthy document was any attempt made to dispel the fears of those who had purchased Church lands or confiscated estates. The absence of any statement on the subject left the large number of persons, who had invested in property of this description, no option but to imagine that it was the King's intention to make them restore their new possessions to the former owners.

Thus, in August, 1795, none of Mr. Pitt's hopes had been realized. The expedition to Brittany, which had begun so auspiciously with Admiral Warren's victory over Villaret-Joyeuse and the successful disembarkation of the *émigrés*, had ended in most disastrous fashion. A prompt advance into the interior, before the Republicans could concentrate, was obviously the plan which should have been adopted. The British war department, however, had most unwisely omitted to appoint a commander-in-chief, and both d'Hervilly and Puisaye claimed to control the operations. But, while they and their followers were quarrelling, the Republican troops had been collected rapidly. Having assembled a respectable force, Hoche assumed the offensive, enclosed the Royalists upon the peninsula of Quiberon, and, on July 21, assisted by treachery in the *émigré* regiments, literally drove them into the sea. D'Hervilly had fallen in action, Puisaye, too hastily, his detractors assert, had escaped to a British

¹ *Annual Register*, 1795, pp. 255-262.

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ship,¹ and it devolved upon the gallant Sombreuil, the son of the last governor of the Bastille, to make the best terms he could with the Republicans. The conditions under which he surrendered have been the subject of much controversy. It will never be known whether Hoche did, or did not, hold out any hopes of mercy. Certain it is, however, that Tallien and the commissioners of the Convention were in no mood to deal leniently with the prisoners. Sombreuil met his fate, on July 28, cursing Puisaye with his last breath,² and, during the following month, the military tribunals at Vannes and at Auray consigned to their doom over 700 Royalist officers.

On the eastern frontiers no disasters had been sustained, but the chances of dealing the Republic a heavy blow in that quarter were greatly diminished. Craufurd, on August 12, was able to report that the Austrians had at last decided to invade Alsace. But the strength of the army to be employed was not to exceed 80,000 men, and the operations would probably be confined to the sieges of Hüningen, Neu-Brisach, and Schlestadt. Moreover, the Imperial generals showed a marked reluctance to assign to Condé a part in the approaching campaign. It had been suggested, indeed, that he should be sent into Italy, a plan, which, Craufurd pointed out, could only increase the suspicion that the Court of Vienna intended to make permanent conquests in Alsace. All Wickham's schemes for raising Lyons and for the entry of Condé into Franche-Comté had depended largely upon the co-operation of an Austro-Sardinian army in Savoy. But the war council at Vienna now declared that the season was too far advanced to permit of General de Vins' crossing the mountains and that his projected operations in south-eastern France must be abandoned

¹ *Windham Papers*, I. pp. 303 and 327-328.

² E. Daudet, *Histoire de l'Émigration*, I. pp. 293-334.

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for the present. It was clear that, even if they should not actually forbid Condé's entry into France, the Austrians had no intention of supporting him, once he had passed the frontiers, and, under these conditions, Craufurd felt sure that he would easily be crushed by the Republicans. Only were the means to be found of gaining over the governor of Besançon would it be prudent for the Prince to penetrate into Franche-Comté without Austrian support. The possession of Besançon he regarded as so important "that no price could be too high to pay for it."¹ Such was the general situation at the time when the first attempt was made to effect an understanding with Pichegru.

On arriving at Strasburg, Fauche-Borel and Courant discovered that it would not be an easy matter to have an interview with Pichegru in private. Not only was he generally surrounded by his staff, but four commissioners of the Convention were permanently attached to his army. Describing themselves as intending purchasers of national property they appear, however, to have gathered full information about the movements of the commander-in-chief, without arousing suspicion. Two generous and hospitable strangers, whose pockets were well supplied with gold, a very rare commodity in those days at Strasburg, were, doubtless, very welcome at inns and taverns frequented by the soldiers. Among those with whom they thus contrived to strike up an acquaintance was an officer of Pichegru's staff, a certain Major Badonville.² He and his general, in former times, had served together as sergeants, and their old friendship was still maintained. Badonville had earned a reputation for exceptional gallantry before the enemy, but in private life he was a hard drinker and an habitual

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 5, Craufurd to Eden, August 11, 1795; Craufurd to Grenville, August 12, 1795; *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 127, 128, 129, 139, 142, 148, 149, 151, 160, 161; F. O. Genoa 12; Drake to Grenville, August 23 and 28, 1795.

² Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. p. 233.

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associate of disorderly women. The experienced Courant had probably little difficulty in reading his character. His practised eye, without doubt, quickly detected in the jovial boon-companion a man ready to sell his soul to gratify his ruling passions. Moreover, the fellow had a grievance. Promotion, for which Pichegru had recommended him, had been denied him by the war department in Paris.¹

No great dependence can be placed upon Fauche-Borel's accounts of the events which followed. Although not so deliberately mendacious as those of Montgaillard they are obviously inaccurate in many particulars. His object, in publishing his *Mémoires* in 1829, was to magnify the importance of the services which he professed to have rendered to the Royal cause, and in the course of his narrative he is usually very loyal to those who assisted him in his different enterprises. Thus, with regard to Badonville, he says, merely, that, having formed an acquaintance with him, soon after his arrival at Strasburg, he made certain proposals to him which were not declined.² But, in spite of this reticence, there can be no doubt about the means which he employed to secure that officer's co-operation. Among some papers, enclosed with a despatch of Wickham, is a document, dated August 20, 1795, and signed by Badonville, acknowledging that he had received a sum of ten *louis* from Fauche-Borel and Courant. About a month later, moreover, as will be related, Courant was for a short time detained as a spy at the frontier, and, on that occasion, two receipts of a like nature were found in his possession.³ It may be assumed, therefore, that small but frequent donations of money were made to Badonville, who undertook, in return, to

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 48.

² Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 282-283.

³ F. O. Switzerland 14, Wickham to Grenville, January 5, 1796 (private).

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render Condé's agents all the assistance in his power. It was probably from him that Fauche-Borel learnt that, on August 16, Pichegru intended to dine and pass the night at the house of his friend, Madame Salomon at Blotzheim, near Hüninguen.¹ It was only on an occasion of this nature that the general could escape from the troublesome presence of the commissioners of the Convention. Fauche-Borel was not slow to avail himself of the opportunity thus vouchsafed him. He appears to have driven out to Blotzheim alone. Courant² was, he says, an excellent linguist and a man full of resources. But he was unsuited for a mission which required the greatest delicacy and tact, by reason of his unpleasing appearance and of his uncouth manners.

On presenting himself at Madame Salomon's house he was at once received by Pichegru who, without doubt, was awaiting his arrival. He had come, he announced, to beg the general to allow him to dedicate to him a complete edition of the works of Rousseau which was shortly to appear. Some conversation followed on the subject of Jean-Jacques, with all of whose sentiments Pichegru declared himself unable to agree. Before he could sanction the use of his name, he must be furnished with a copy of the matter it was proposed to publish. This question having been settled and it being clearly inexpedient to waste further time, Fauche, in great trepidation, as he himself admits, proceeded to disclose the real motive of his visit to Blotzheim. In a voice which shook in spite of all his efforts to control it, he told the general that he was the bearer of an important message. "Who is it from?" asked Pichegru. "From the Prince de Condé," answered Fauche. At these words the general grasped him by the arm. The gesture, however, betokened no

¹ Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 43.

² Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. p. 230.

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indignation and was followed not by an order for his instant arrest, but by an intimation to speak lower and to explain matters quickly. Fauche, greatly relieved, thereupon imparted to him that the Prince de Condé, feeling sure that he could have no belief in the stability of the Republic, suggested that they should concert together about the best means of uniting their armies and of proclaiming the King. Pichegru listened in silence and, when his visitor had finished speaking, bade him go away and return in two days' time, at five o'clock in the afternoon, with Condé's proposals in writing. He could not himself go to Basle, he pointed out, and it was equally impossible for the Prince to visit him at Blotzheim.¹

Fauche-Borel returned as speedily as he could to Basle to apprise Montgaillard of his very satisfactory interview with the Republican general. There are great discrepancies in the accounts which these two men have given, at various times, of their subsequent proceedings. Each claims to have gone to Condé to impart to him the welcome news and to discuss future plans.² M. Daudet,³ however, quotes a note, discovered among the Chantilly papers, from the Prince to Montgaillard, which tends to confirm the truth of Fauche's story, that it was he who proceeded to Müllheim, which was only distant some ten miles from Basle. Be that as it may, on August 18, Fauche unquestionably re-entered France, carrying concealed in the sleeve of his coat an autograph letter of Condé,⁴ dated that same day and

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 239-242; also "*Résumé des divers entretiens de Baptiste (Pichegru) avec Louis*" (Fauche-Borel), quoted by M. E. Daudet in his *Conjuration de Pichegru*, p. 887.

² *Pièce trouvée à Venise dans le portefeuille d'Entraignes intitulée ma conversation avec le Comte de Montgaillard*. Fauche-Borel *Mémoires*, I. pp. 243-244.

³ E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, pp. 76-77.

⁴ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 45 (note 6). Fauche, in his *Mémoires* (I. pp. 243-244), gives a somewhat different version. But there can be little doubt that the letter quoted by M. Caudrillier

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written on plain paper without seal or coat of arms but signed Louis-Joseph de Bourbon. "Seeing that M. Pichegru," wrote His Highness, "is in the mind which I expected, he should send me a line in his own hand and also some person in his confidence to whom I may explain all the advantages which I can guarantee to M. Pichegru, provided he will combine with me for the purpose of saving France and of re-establishing the King upon his throne."

It will be observed that the Prince de Condé, regardless of the offence which the omission might give to the man whose assistance he was soliciting, could not bring himself to address him by the title of general, which he had gained under the Republic.

In addition to Condé's short note, Fauche-Borel carried with him a letter from Montgaillard, in which the tone of fulsome adulation contrasts strongly with the cold and haughty language employed by the Bourbon Prince. To this communication was annexed a more important document containing the conditions under which it was proposed that the King's restoration should be carried out and the union of the two armies be effected. Pichegru was to proclaim Louis XVIII. under the title of *King of France and Navarre*. His army would then take the oath of allegiance and the Bourbon flag be hoisted at Strasburg and Hüninguen. A trumpeter was to be sent across the Rhine to apprise the Prince de Condé that Louis XVIII. had been proclaimed King in the Republican camp and to invite him to cross the river and join forces with Pichegru: A suspension of hostilities, pending the arrival of His Majesty, who must be sent for in all haste, would be proposed to the Austrians. Provided

was the one actually given to Pichegru and returned by him to Fauche.

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the general would agree to these conditions, Montgaillard was empowered to promise him the title of a marshal of France, the *château* of Chambord, a yearly income of 200,000 *livres*, a gratuity of 1,000,000 *livres* and a house in Paris. Furthermore, a monument would be set up bearing the inscription, "Pichegru saved the French monarchy and gave peace to Europe." Arbois, his native town, would be exempt from taxation for ten years and in future would bear his name. A medal would be struck in his honour and Saint-Denis should be his place of burial. Lastly, the officers serving under him would retain their rank and be rewarded according to his recommendations.¹

When he arrived at Blotzheim, in the afternoon of August 18, at the appointed hour, Fauche-Borel found Pichegru surrounded by the officers of his staff, and in the act of mounting his horse. In these circumstances, he judged it inexpedient to make any attempt to communicate with him. Two days later, however, both he and Courant appear to have been present at the army headquarters at Illkirch. Nevertheless, it is open to doubt whether his story be true that on that occasion he had an interview with Pichegru. In his *Mémoires* he says nothing about his companion and implies that he alone was admitted to see the general. But the whole account of his visit to Illkirch, on August 20, as related in his book, is fantastic and bears no stamp of truth upon it. It is therein stated that he purposely omitted to give to Pichegru Montgaillard's letter, being convinced that the general's sense of delicacy would be shocked by the crude proposals contained in it.² On the other hand in a report, drawn up at Basle, immediately after his return from Illkirch, he says distinctly that

¹ E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, pp. 77-80.

² Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 245-247.

he and Courant saw Pichegru at eight o'clock in the morning and gave him both His Highness' note and Montgaillard's letter.¹ M. Daudet,² however, doubts whether the interview ever took place and considers that no more credence should be attached to the report than to the story as told in the *Mémoires*. His contention is supported by the fact that Badonville's receipt for ten *louis*, which has been previously mentioned, bears the date of August 20, and has inscribed upon it the words "*pour objets remis*," a circumstance which, while it increases the probability that Fauche and Courant were on that day at headquarters, raises a strong presumption that it was to Badonville, not to the general himself, that the documents were committed. It is, however, immaterial whether Fauche actually placed the letters in Pichegru's hands, or paid Badonville, the general's intimate friend, to convey them to him. If the exact manner in which they were delivered be doubtful, it is beyond question that they safely reached the man for whom they were intended.

According to Fauche's report, some conversation took place at Illkirch, on August 20, as to the manner in which the union of the armies should be effected. Either Pichegru himself or Badonville insisted that Montgaillard's plan was impracticable. It was on the right bank of the Rhine, not on the left, as he had proposed, that the Royalists and Republicans must fraternize and proclaim the King. Condé, however, on learning that this was Pichegru's opinion declared himself unable to concur with it. The Austrians, he pointed out, would never allow the Republicans to cross the Rhine unopposed. Were he to assure them that General Pichegru was well intentioned and acting in collusion with him, they

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 46-47.

² E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, p. 81.

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would deride the notion with scorn. The projected passage of the Rhine, they would indubitably maintain, was a transparent *ruse* to enable the Republican commander to carry his troops across the river. He, therefore, adhered firmly to his original plan, and, in a second letter, which was again entrusted to Fauche, he enumerated his different objections to Pichegru's proposals, and set forth the alternative measures, which he suggested should be adopted.

It should be an easy matter, wrote Condé, for Pichegru to cause the representatives of the people attached to his army to be seized in their beds. This precaution having been taken, his troops should be ordered to assume the white cockade and to march, without arms to the banks of the Rhine, where they might be instructed to shout "Long live the King," at the top of their voices. At the same time an officer should cross the river with a flag of truce, taking with him the commissioners of the Convention, securely bound, in order that they might be handed over as hostages to the Prince de Condé, who would be informed that he was now free to enter Hüninguen. Then, and not till then, would His Highness acquaint the Austrians with the position of affairs. Nothing short of the actual surrender of Hüninguen would convince the Imperial generals that the conversion of the Republican army to Royalist opinions was not a stratagem. "It was the only way," concluded Condé. "M. P. has it in his power to save the King, the State, and to win immortality."¹

This letter, which shows how little Condé understood the situation, was delivered to Pichegru on August 25. Fauche, in his report of his proceedings at Illkirch on that date, describes the general as most favourably disposed, but strongly of opinion that

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 48-50.

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the time had not yet come for action. His plans, he assured him, were far from complete. But in deference to Condé's wish, Pichegru promised to send, within three days, some person in his confidence to Basle, and, so far departed from his habitual prudence, as to entrust to Fauche two lines in his own hand. This note, which, among the vast mass of documents connected with this affair, appears to be the only one actually written by Pichegru, was to the following effect: "Y. has received X.'s letters and will consider them with the object of making use of them at the proper time. He will be careful to give X. due warning."¹

Condé was greatly elated. Pichegru, he was now satisfied, was animated by the best intentions. Nevertheless, upon one important point they were unable to agree. Whereas, the Prince insisted that the affair must be initiated by the surrender of Hüninguen and the proclamation of the King in the Republican lines, Pichegru professed his inability to effect anything, until he should have crossed the Rhine and be firmly established upon the right bank. His reasons for adopting this attitude are not difficult to divine. Without doubt, he was in a very undecided state of mind. In his opinion the destruction of the revolutionary *régime* was imminent. He knew that in Paris the *sections* were preparing to strike a blow at the Convention, and any day the news might arrive that the existing government had been overthrown. Apart from the fact that he genuinely disliked the Republic it was plainly to his interest, in these circumstances, to be among the first to make his peace with the Bourbons. It was possible, however, that, contrary to his hopes and expectations, the Convention might emerge victorious from the struggle, and he was, therefore, determined not to commit himself prematurely. Hence his refusal to cede Hüninguen

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 50-51.

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and to proclaim the King upon the left bank of the Rhine. But, were he to cross the river, he ran no risk of compromising himself with the Republican authorities in Paris. On the contrary, it was an operation upon which the Committee of Public Safety was constantly urging him to embark. Once upon the other side of the river, he could act in accordance with circumstances. Should the Convention be overthrown, and should his army be favourably disposed, he could unite with Condé and declare for the Bourbons. On the other hand, should the revolt of the *sections* be suppressed the victorious party would have no reason to complain of his conduct. He would merely have obeyed his instructions and have taken the initial step for opening the campaign against the Austrians in the Palatinate.

There was another matter, however, which gave Condé much food for reflection. Pichegru demanded no money for himself, but, before proclaiming the King, he insisted on knowing whether His Highness could furnish him with the means of provisioning his army. On more than one occasion, while discussing the subject with Fauche and with Courant, he seems to have indulged in several facetious remarks. Experience had taught him, he is supposed to have declared, that the soldier imbibed his political opinions with his drink. A dollar in his pocket and a liberal supply of food and liquor would go far towards reconciling him to a change of flag.¹ Whether or not he actually expressed himself in these terms, it was plainly essential that he should have ample funds to dispose of at the critical moment when his troops were to be invited to assume the white cockade. But Condé had no money to give him and could obtain funds only from Wickham and Craufurd, and unfortunately he had promised Montgaillard that these gentlemen should not be admitted into the secret.

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. p. 259. Montgaillard, *Mémoire concernant la conjuration de Pichegru*.

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Montgaillard was, doubtless, too shrewd not to have foreseen that this was a difficulty which was bound to arise. He had been obliged to stipulate that Pitt's agents should not be informed of the negotiation, because he feared that Wickham would insist upon excluding him from all participation in the affair. But at the same time he was perfectly aware that it was only from the British minister that Condé could obtain financial assistance. Some means must, therefore, be devised of inducing him to advance money, while concealing from him the fact that Montgaillard was the principal agent in the negotiation he was to be asked to promote. The Prince had no fear that Mr. Wickham would make difficulties about furnishing the means of prosecuting so promising a scheme. Nor had he any reason to apprehend that he would insist upon taking the management of the affair into his own hands. On the contrary, he knew well that in all matters of the kind he wished to remain in the background as far as possible. Wickham was of opinion that, whenever it should be necessary to send money into the interior of France, matters should so be arranged as to make it appear that the assistance came from Condé and not from the English government. Nothing, he maintained, was more calculated to raise the character and influence of His Highness "within," than the idea that he had funds at his disposal.¹ But, although these were Wickham's sentiments, Condé was more than doubtful whether he would consent to furnish him with the large sum he required, unless he were placed in full possession of all the details of the affair. On this occasion, however, he felt that the attempt must be made.

M. Caudrillier,² in his exhaustive study of the affair, has named September 11, as the day on which

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 101 and 105.

² G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 57.

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the two Englishmen were informed that a correspondence with Pichegru was in progress. In this instance, however, he would seem to be mistaken. The news, there can be no doubt, must have been conveyed to them at least a fortnight earlier. In a ciphered despatch, dated August 27, 1795, Craufurd not only mentions the fact that the negotiation had been opened, but states that Pichegru, should he declare in favour of the King, would have to be furnished with money for the subsistence of his army.¹ Wickham, in an account of the whole business drawn up for Lord Grenville's information, in March, 1797,² says that Condé for the first time told him about his relation with Pichegru, "six weeks" after the talk he had had with him on the subject of that general's supposed intrigues with Hardenburg,—a conversation which took place at Müllheim early in July. Writing about eighteen months later, Wickham might conceivably speak of an episode which happened on September 11, as having occurred "six weeks after" another event which took place at the beginning of July. But his next sentence makes it evident that the secret must have been imparted to him at an earlier date than M. Caudrillier suggests. He says most distinctly that it was divulged to Craufurd and himself at the same time, and, inasmuch as the colonel was in a position to write to Grenville about it on August 27, the Prince must have given them the information either on that date or on some previous occasion. The balance of probabilities points strongly to the morning of the 27th as the time when Condé first spoke to them about the affair. In order to convince them that the negotiation was genuine, he appears to have shown them the general's note and to have told them that he had received it during the night. This statement

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 5, Craufurd to Grenville, August 27, 1795.

² F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, March 8, 1797.

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clearly refers to the two lines in his own hand given by Pichegru to Fauche which would, doubtless, reach Müllheim on the evening of the 26th.

Wickham, although he omits to mention the exact date on which the occurrence took place, relates all the circumstances connected with it in detail. It was on the occasion of one of those frequent visits which he and Craufurd were in the habit of paying to Müllheim. After an evening devoted to discussions about the military and political situation, the Prince took leave of them. A very early hour the next morning had been fixed for their departure, but, as they were in the act of entering their carriage, word was brought them that His Highness desired to speak with them. When they were shown into his room, the Prince, calling them to the side of the bed, from which he had not yet risen, confided to them that he had taken their advice and was actually in direct communication with General Pichegru. Reminding them of their promise that funds would be forthcoming to sustain the negotiation, he asked them whether he could depend upon their assistance. They assured him that he need have no anxiety on that point and eagerly inquired how the affair had been managed. Condé, however, professed to be unable to satisfy their curiosity. He had pledged his word not to disclose the names of the agents concerned in the transaction. Wickham, thereupon, begged him to understand clearly that he could not provide the required money without knowing through whose hands it was to pass. But not even this threat could induce His Highness to be more communicative. The two Englishmen, finding that nothing they could say was of any avail, took their departure.¹

Disappointed as Condé doubtless was, he can scarcely have been surprised that Wickham should

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, March 8, 1797.

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adopt this attitude. He could at least derive comfort from the assurance that Pitt's gold would be placed at his disposal, the moment he should see fit to take the English agents completely into his confidence. At this period he was more concerned about another, and a more unexpected, development of the affair. The person in Pichegru's confidence who was to be sent to Basle, not later than August 28, had not yet arrived. The days went by and Montgaillard, although he affected to believe that all was well and that there was, doubtless, good reason for the delay, was fain to confess that he had received no news of any kind from Pichegru. At last, on September 6, it was decided that Courant should revisit Illkirch, endeavour to see the general, and ascertain why he had not sent to Basle his promised emissary.

Courant, Montgaillard urged, must not go empty-handed. Condé, however, could not comply with his advice. He could obtain money only, he replied, from Wickham or from Craufurd, neither of whom, Montgaillard himself had always insisted, must be informed of the affair. His Highness, it will be observed, was careful to conceal from his agent that he had already divulged to the Englishmen the fact that the negotiation had been initiated. Courant, accordingly, started off unprovided with money and, having obtained admission to Pichegru at Illkirch, returned to Basle, on September 11, to report the result of his mission to Montgaillard. The general, he related,¹ declined to surrender Hüningen to Condé. No useful effect could be produced by isolated action. To achieve success more far-reaching measures must be devised. He was in touch with the enemies of the Republic in the capital. The destruction of the Convention could be consummated only by the citizens of Paris and by the armies upon the frontiers acting in

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 55.

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combination. The attack upon the Jacobins must be enveloping and overwhelming. But the hour for action had not yet struck. At the right moment he would declare himself and, in the meantime, he must not be urged to show his hand prematurely. Whatever might happen he was resolved to avoid the mistakes of La Fayette and Dumouriez.

The perusal of Courant's report afforded Condé great dissatisfaction. On August 26, Montgaillard had been prepared to stake his reputation that, within a fortnight, Pichegru would change the face of Europe. But matters had not developed as he had predicted. The Republican general not only refused to surrender Hüninguen, but was not prepared to execute any other measures for the present. His plans, such as they were, could not be carried into effect for some time to come and were to be subordinated to the action of the *sections* in Paris, the leaders of which, Condé apprehended, were rather Constitutionalists than true Royalists. Montgaillard sought to explain matters by suggesting that Pichegru was annoyed because no funds had been sent him. At his last interview with Courant, he had expressed a hope that the spy would return in a few days and bring some money with him. It was evident that, until that condition should be complied with, he would make no move. Perhaps, suggested Montgaillard, Craufurd might agree to advance the required sum, were His Highness to assure him that it was needed for some very secret operation in the interior of France, the precise nature of which he could not disclose. Possibly, however, it might be better to lay before him a more definite scheme. In that case, could he not be told that, provided he would furnish the necessary money, the desertion of some 10,000 or 12,000 Republican soldiers could be procured?¹ Condé was disposed to agree that Pichegru

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 58.

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would never take action until a considerable sum of money should be placed at his disposal. But he had good reason to know that none of the devices proposed by Montgaillard would make the Englishmen loosen their purse strings. He was well aware of the conditions under which their assistance could be obtained, and he now came to the conclusion that he must submit to their terms.

Being of opinion that Wickham's aid must be invoked, Condé appears to have confided to one of his agents, a certain Fénouillot, the fact that the Englishmen had been informed that a correspondence had been opened with Pichegru. This man, whose name it has hitherto been unnecessary to mention, was a lawyer of Besançon. He was a friend of Fauche and had by him been initiated into the secret of the negotiation.¹ At various times, also, he would seem to have been employed by Wickham to communicate with the Royalists of his native town. His rôle in the affair of General Pichegru probably consisted in carrying messages between Basle and Müllheim. When Montgaillard learnt from this person, who apparently had been charged to tell him, that the Englishmen were aware that communications had been established with Pichegru, he pretended to be highly indignant. The success of their great undertaking, he wrote to Condé, was indubitably compromised. The English agents, he was convinced, would be instructed from London secretly to embarrass the negotiation. MM. Fauche, Fénouillot, and Courant agreed with him, and they must all in consequence beg to be excused from taking any further part in the affair. Condé, on receiving this letter, at once despatched to Basle an officer in his confidence, the Marquis de Montesson, to endeavour to arrange matters.² This was easily effected

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. p. 228.

² G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 59.

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the moment Montgaillard was assured that his name would not be mentioned to Wickham.

This difficulty having been overcome, Fauche started off for Berne accompanied, as it would seem, by Fénouillot. He was instructed to disclose to the British minister all the circumstances connected with his different missions to General Pichegru. Only the fact that Montgaillard was concerned in the negotiation was studiously to be kept from him. Moreover, he carried with him a letter, dated September 17, 1795, in which Condé implored Wickham to hand over to his agent a sum of 200,000 or 300,000 *francs*. Pichegru, wrote His Highness, had declared that he must have money. Fauche was in comfortable circumstances and a man of good repute. Money entrusted to him would not be misapplied. Should, however, Mr. Wickham feel any doubts about his honesty,¹ let him retain Fénouillot as a hostage at Berne. Wickham, in his account of his interview with Fauche, speaks of him as a person he should not himself have selected "because he wanted both the talents and the discretion necessary for such an undertaking."² But on the whole he must have been favourably impressed by him. After listening to the story of his several visits to Pichegru and receiving his assurance that Courant and himself were the only agents who had taken part in the affair, he decided to comply with Condé's request. Fauche, when he departed, took away with him a bill which Wickham had drawn in his favour for £8,000.³

It is difficult to believe that the suspicions of so acute a man as Wickham should not have been aroused on learning the names and social standing of Condé's

¹ E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, p. 98.

² F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, March 8, 1797.

³ F. O. Switzerland 12, Wickham to Grenville, November 15, 1795. In an account of the expenditure of secret service money appears the following item: M. Fauche, September 22, 1795, £8000.

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agents. Without doubt, it must have struck him as curious that a prince of the blood should have been so reluctant to disclose to him that he had commissioned a professional spy and a tradesman of Neufchatel to convey his messages to Pichegru. Whether in consequence of investigations deliberately set on foot, or whether the information came to him accidentally, he was not long in ascertaining the truth. In the course of the following month he learned that Mounier, with whom he had maintained friendly relations, was aware that Condé was in secret communication with the Republican general. The news had been imparted to him by Mallet du Pan, who had acquired it from Montgaillard, with whom he was in the habit of corresponding on political matters.¹ Montgaillard, he further discovered, had given the same information to the secretary of the Austrian minister, Baron Degelman. On ascertaining these facts, Wickham hastened to Müllheim to warn His Highness that his secret was known to a man who, "he had strong reasons for thinking, was in constant correspondence with the friends he had left behind in Paris." He then learnt to his "mortification that Montgaillard had been consulted from the first and that it was he who had engaged M. Fauche to embark upon the business." The Prince expressed deep regret and promised to repose no further confidence in him. Unfortunately, however, he broke his word and Wickham, in circumstances which will be related in due course, discovered that his salutary warning had been completely disregarded.²

At the same time as he had despatched Fauche to Berne, Condé had confided another mission to Courant. He was to convey to Pichegru a letter containing assurances that measures were being taken for supplying him with money. Condé seems to have been in a

¹ Mallet du Pan, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 249-250.

² F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, March 8, 1797.

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position to advance out of his own purse an instalment of the promised amount,¹ seeing that Courant, when he set out, on September 18, carried with him a sum of 1000 *louis*. Scarcely, however, had the spy entered French territory, when he was arrested by a party of mounted *gendarmes*, acting under instructions from the French minister at Basle, and detained at the frontier, until the arrival of Bacher, the secretary of the legation. Courant, in this predicament, showed that he was a man of resource and one, moreover, who knew how to turn to useful account the knowledge he had acquired in the course of his career as a secret agent. He contrived, at the first sign of danger, not only to swallow unperceived Condé's letter, but to confide his gold into the keeping of an official of the customs, an uncle of Pichegru's friend, Madame Salomon. When brought before Bacher, who charged him with being a Royalist emissary, he proclaimed himself a subject of the King of Prussia and loudly demanded to be set at liberty. At the same time, he quietly intimated to his accuser that he was aware that, during the recent negotiations for peace, both he and his chief had been the recipients of his royal master's generosity. Bacher probably came to the conclusion that Courant was a man with whom it were wiser not to meddle. In any case, he declared that he could discover no reason for maintaining him in arrest. Courant was, accordingly, released, but, thinking that it would be imprudent to proceed upon his journey, he returned and reported to Montgaillard the misadventure which had befallen him.²

Courant having failed to carry out his mission, it was very necessary, Montgaillard insisted, that Fauche should rejoin Pichegru as speedily as possible. That individual having converted Wickham's bill into cash at

¹ He was in receipt of an allowance from the British government for his private use.

² G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 60.

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Lausanne had returned to Müllheim to inform the Prince of the successful result of his expedition to Berne. On hearing his news, His Highness instructed him forthwith to seek out Pichegru and place the money at his immediate disposal. He might keep 200 *louis* for himself, Condé told him, and hand over a like sum to both Montgaillard and Courant. This matter having been settled, Fauche proceeded to make arrangements for carrying out the Prince's commands. The arrest of Courant and the change which had recently come over the military situation suggested that the French authorities intended to exercise, in future, a more vigilant watch over the movements of travelling strangers. Jourdan, on September 6, had crossed the Rhine and active hostilities were once more in progress. In these circumstances Fauche decided not to attempt to reach Pichegru by the direct road he had followed on former occasions, but to seek to gain his headquarters by way of Besançon and Vesoul. As an additional precaution, he invested some of Wickham's money in a supply of gold and silver watches, which he bought before leaving Switzerland. In the character of a tradesman, who had goods to dispose of, he hoped to be able to follow the armies without arousing suspicion. His purchases, moreover, could be turned to account in another way. Many an officer, he was of opinion, might be gained over to the Royal cause by the gift of a watch.¹

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 269-273.

CHAPTER IV

THE CAMPAIGN IN THE PALATINATE

THE Republican armies on the eastern frontiers of France were divided into three groups under independent commanders. To the Army of the North, under Moreau, was assigned the defence of the Netherlands. This task had been simplified greatly by the article in the Treaty of Basle, whereby France and Prussia had agreed to maintain the neutrality of northern Germany. Austria, it was true, had announced that she could not recognize conditions of that kind but, inasmuch as she had no desire to provoke a war with Prussia, it was most improbable that she would venture to penetrate in force into Westphalia. The country to the south as far as the Moselle was occupied by Jourdan, who commanded the army, known as that of the Sambre and Meuse, while, to his right, the line was prolonged by Pichegru, upon whom devolved the defence of the Upper Rhine as far as the Swiss frontier. The condition of that general's army, in the summer of 1795, has already been described. It was a state of affairs, however, which was not confined to his command. Jourdan had the same difficulties to contend with and suffered, no less than his colleague, from want of money and from lack of horses and supplies. In these circumstances he agreed with Pichegru that the passage of the Rhine could not be attempted; and was content to devote himself exclusively to the reduction of Luxemburg, which he had invested in the previous month of November. But when that fortress, one of the two

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important strongholds still retained by Austria on the left bank of the Rhine, capitulated on June 25, Jourdan set to work to carry out the wishes of the Committee of Public Safety and proceeded to assume the offensive. The news that he had crossed the river, on September 6, 1795, in the neighbourhood of Düsseldorf, took the Austrian staff completely by surprise.

Craufurd, it will be remembered, was able to report, on August 12,¹ that the Austrians had decided to invade Alsace with an army of 80,000 men under General Wurmser. But the preparations for their projected movement were conducted with their usual deliberation and, in this instance, were believed to have been impeded by Marshal Clerfayt's jealousy of Wurmser.² On September 6, when the Republicans crossed the Rhine, the Austrian concentration was still very far from completed. Jourdan's offensive appears to have been assumed without a previous consultation with Pichegru. Doubtless, it was a development which was as displeasing to him as it was to the Austrian staff. It was far from his wish, at this moment, to embark upon an active campaign beyond the Rhine. His thoughts were concentrated exclusively upon the march of political events in Paris. Daily he expected to receive the news that the *sections* had risen and overthrown the Convention. He was occupied, not in devising the most effectual means of driving the Austrians out of the Palatinate, but in considering when, and under what conditions, he should unite with Condé and proclaim the King. Nevertheless, he dared not remain inactive and allow Jourdan to struggle single-handed with the superior forces which the Austrians would, in a short time, be able to bring against him.

¹ V. p. 38.

² F. O. Army in Germany 6, Craufurd to Eden, September 10, 1795.

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From the Republican point of view the situation was highly favourable. Jourdan's irruption across the Rhine had compelled Clerfayt to retreat to the south, to the river Main, in order to draw closer to Wurmser. But, on September 12, they were still far apart and it was clearly in the power of Pichegru to interpose between them and prevent their junction. The undertaking was rendered the more easy of execution by reason of certain secret information which he and his staff possessed. The town of Mannheim is situated on the right bank of the Rhine, some eighty miles below Strasburg, at the point where the Neckar unites its waters with those of the greater river. The garrison consisted of Bavarian troops exclusively, and their commander had instructions from the Elector to capitulate, rather than to expose the town to a bombardment. Under existing conditions, the possession of Mannheim was of supreme importance to the French. Pichegru, under cover of its works, would be enabled to pass his troops across the Rhine in perfect security, and, provided the surrender of this valuable *tête de pont* could be arranged quickly, a greater prize would be within his grasp. Heidelberg, which lies about fifteen miles to the south-east of Mannheim, on the right bank of the Neckar, was the chief Austrian *depôt* of stores and *matériel*. But, apart from this circumstance, were it to be captured by the French, communication between Clerfayt and Wurmser would be severed and each of them could be dealt with separately.¹ Nevertheless, in spite of its strategical importance, Heidelberg was not held in force by the Austrians. The idea that Mannheim would be allowed to fall had not entered into the calculations of the Imperial staff. But Wurmser, realizing the danger, was now straining every nerve to provide for its adequate protection.

¹ H. Bourdon, *Les armées du Rhine*, pp. 66-69.

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On September 11, when the intelligence reached Illkirch that Jourdan had effected his passage of the river, Merlin, the member for Thionville, one of the representatives of the people attached to the Republican Army of the Rhine, started off to open negotiations for the surrender of Mannheim. Pichegru had, in consequence, no alternative but to take measures for supporting the diplomatic action of the commissioner of the Convention. But it was only on September 17, on receipt of specific instructions from Paris, that he himself set out for the scene of operations, while his orders for the concentration of his troops were, apparently, not issued until the following day. Merlin, meanwhile, had successfully arranged matters with the governor of Mannheim. That officer, when Pichegru, on September 19, called upon him to surrender, complied at once, stipulating merely that no requisitions should be levied upon the territories of the Elector.¹ Wurmser, however, was keenly upon the alert and had, some days before, directed one of his lieutenants, General Quosdanovich, to proceed by forced marches to Heidelberg with 12,000 men. The Austrians, Pichegru complained, had been placed upon their guard by the ill-considered action of Merlin. Until his troops had reached their prescribed stations, opposite Mannheim, no overtures should have been addressed to the governor. Had this course been adopted, Wurmser, he maintained, would not have divined the direction in which he was preparing to strike, and no reinforcements would, in consequence, have been sent to the threatened point. But this explanation, by which he sought to divert from himself the blame for the events which followed, is not in accordance with facts as they can now be established. Wurmser's instructions to Quosdanovich are dated September 14, three days

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 6, Craufurd to Grenville, September 22, 1795.

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before the arrival of Merlin's emissary at Mannheim.¹

But, although Wurmser by his diligence had somewhat diminished the danger, the Austrians were none the less in a very critical situation. Now that Mannheim was in his possession, Pichegru, it was only reasonable to conjecture, would direct against Heidelberg every man he could dispose of, and in that case Quosdanovich would have to withstand the attack of a force largely superior to his own. This, in effect, was the course of action which Pichegru announced that he intended to pursue. No sooner was the capitulation signed, than he wrote to Paris to inform the Committee of Public Safety that he proposed to move all his available troops across the Rhine, for the purpose of intercepting communications between Clerfayt and Wurmser. Nevertheless, only two weak divisions, the combined strength of which amounted to some 12,000 men, were detailed for the projected operation. Numerically they were not inferior to the detachment of Quosdanovich, but Pichegru directed them to advance by both banks of the Neckar, notwithstanding that they had not been supplied with pontoons or bridging materials. Accordingly, on the morning of September 23, the French moved forward to their objective in two columns, which were separated from each other by a river, over which they had not the means of crossing. Contact between the opposing forces was established in the afternoon and, during the night, Pichegru prescribed that on the morrow matters were to be pushed to an issue by an advance upon the town of Heidelberg. The skirmishes of the day before, however, had revealed to the Austrian commander the faulty dispositions of his opponents. Disregarding his enemies upon the south side of the river, Quosdanovich resolved to devote his whole attention to the destruction

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 64-65.

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of the French left wing, which was approaching by the right bank of the Neckar. Thus it happened, on September 24, that General Dufour's division, after an unsuccessful attack upon the Austrian position, was itself assailed by a superior force and driven back in confusion upon Mannheim. Meanwhile, Pichegru and the troops of the right wing, on the other side of the Neckar, had been the helpless spectators of the discomfiture of their comrades, to whose retrograde movement they were forced to conform before nightfall.¹

"Smaller numbers never decided a more important question." With these words a Dutch diplomatist, who had witnessed the engagement, concluded a description of the action of the 24th drawn up for the information of Lord Grenville.² French historians, with the exception of M. E. Daudet, have generally ascribed the disaster, which befell the Republicans upon the Neckar, to deliberate treachery on the part of Pichegru. He is charged with having neglected to make use of all the troops which were available for an operation of vital importance and of having, in his orders to the force, which he actually employed, violated a cardinal principle of the art of war. But to determine with any degree of confidence the number of men of which a general can dispose for a particular operation on a given day, it is necessary to know, not only the strength and exact station of every unit under his command, but what intelligence he had received of the movements and intentions of his enemies. If precise information on these points be wanting, it is hardly possible to arrive at any fair conclusion. The case of Pichegru, however, stands by itself. In criticizing his dispositions, circumstances must be taken into account which have rarely to be considered when the conduct of other generals is examined.

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 65-70.

² F. O. Army in Germany 6, Kinckel to Grenville, October 6, 1795.

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In his history of this affair, M. Ernest Daudet has sought to show that Pichegru, although he had entered into secret relations with Condé, none the less continued faithfully to perform his duty as a general of the Republic. He admits that he was a Royalist, but he contends that he was never prepared, on that account, to concede any advantage to the Austrians.¹ Few people, however, will be disposed to take that view of the question. The army of Condé was in the pay of Austria and Great Britain and its movements were regulated by the orders of the Imperial staff. Pichegru, it cannot be doubted, knew very well that to embark upon a clandestine correspondence with Condé was, for all practical purposes, to enter into communication with England and Austria. It is perfectly true, however, that, had the secret of his relations with the Bourbons not transpired, his military dispositions, at the outset of the campaign of 1795, would not suffice to convict him of treason to the Republic. His army would never appear to have exceeded 75,000 men and he was called upon to defend a line of river 150 miles in length. By order of the Committee of Public Safety nearly one-half of his force was employed upon the fruitless task of investing Mainz upon the left bank of the Rhine. Another 30,000 of his men, distributed between Strasburg and Hüninguen; were engaged in covering Upper-Alsace and Franche-Comté and in watching the Swiss frontier which, it was not improbable, the Austrians might violate. But, once the operations against Heidelberg had been decided upon, it was clearly his duty to divert to Mannheim all the troops not absolutely required for the defence of the lines of circumvallation at Mainz. This in point of fact was the plan he followed. It was from the investing force that the two divisions were drawn which fought upon the Neckar. It has

¹ E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, pp. 110-114.

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been contended, however, that, without endangering the lines at Mainz, more troops might have been detached to Mannheim. But the calculation, by which this conclusion has been arrived at, appears to be based upon very insufficient *data*. Nevertheless, it is difficult to suggest any reason why the cavalry division attached to the besieging force was not utilized. Mounted troops were not required for the defence of field works, but they would have been of great service upon the Neckar.¹ Clearly, however, it was impossible to detach any considerable body of men from the southern extremity of the line. So long as the Austrians were in force in Breisgau, Pichegru could not diminish the number of his troops guarding the Upper Rhine and covering Franche-Comté.

With regard to the orders for the march upon Heidelberg it is possible to speak with more certainty. Pichegru had received intelligence that the garrison of the town, he professed to be anxious to capture, had been reinforced.² He was aware that the two divisions to be employed upon the operation would be opposed by an Austrian force of equal, if not superior, numbers. Yet he saw fit to arrange that they should move upon their objective in two columns, which could afford each other no mutual support, inasmuch as an impassable river intervened between them. But many generals, whose fidelity to the cause they served it would be absurd to question, have for no apparent reason failed to utilize at the decisive point all their available troops. Numerous instances could be quoted of other commanders of high repute whose operation orders have transgressed the rules of war as flagrantly as any drawn up by Pichegru. His case, however, as has been said already, stands in a category by itself. If it appear strange that he should have tarried so long at

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 66-68.

² *Ibid.*, p. 63.

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Illkirch, after active hostilities had begun, it must be remembered that he had strong reasons for desiring to remain near Condé and that he was daily expecting to receive the money he required to carry out his *pronunciamento*. If it be asked why this brigade or that division was not included in the force directed against Heidelberg, it has to be borne in mind that a victory upon the Neckar would increase the *prestige* of the Convention and render doubly difficult the task of his friends in Paris, who were conspiring to overthrow it. If it excite wonder that an officer of his experience should have disposed his troops for action so unskillfully, it must not be forgotten that he regarded the restoration of the Bourbons as imminent, and the fact that he had suffered a reverse, at a critical moment, would give him an additional claim upon the favour and gratitude of his prospective sovereign. Both Craufurd and Wickham appear to have had little doubt that considerations such as these influenced all his military measures. "With respect to Pichegru," wrote Craufurd on October 18, 1795,¹ "it is very clear that he has by no means co-operated heartily with Jourdan to invade Germany . . . He was present, it seems, at the affair at Ladenburg,² but did not interfere in the command of the troops . . . All these circumstances seem to agree with the intention he expressed of serving the Royal cause and rather favour our hopes of his sincerity." Wickham,³ writing to Grenville on the subject of the sums he had expended in connection with Condé's correspondence with Pichegru, emits the same opinion. The money, he declares, was well spent, inasmuch as "it contributed to paralyze the efforts of the Army of the Rhine."

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 6, Craufurd to Grenville, October 18, 1795.

² The action of September 23 and 24 upon the Neckar.

³ F. O. Switzerland 17, Wickham to Grenville, May 14, 1796.

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If the circumstances of the case be reviewed as a whole, if due account be taken of the opinion of these two men, the conclusion is almost irresistible that it was defeat, not victory, which Pichegru set himself to organize, when Jourdan's irruption into Germany put an end to the long inaction of the armies upon the Rhine.

The reverse upon the Neckar had deprived the French of an excellent opportunity of interposing between the two wings of the Austrian army. But they retained all the advantages accruing from interior lines. Pichegru could still direct to the Main all the troops he could dispose of, and effect a junction with Jourdan. In that event Clerfayt, the *morale* of whose men had been shaken by their recent encounters with the Army of the Sambre and Meuse, would be placed in a position of considerable numerical inferiority, even with the assistance he might expect to receive from Wurmser. The bulk of that general's troops, however, were still in the neighbourhood of Friburg. There was an alternative open to Pichegru which the Austrian staff was bound to bear in mind. Instead of marching to the Main, he might see fit to second the operations of Jourdan in a less direct, but in an equally effectual, manner. Collecting all the troops he could at Mainz and Mannheim, he might hasten south, unite with those upon the Upper Rhine, and cross the river between Strasburg and Hüninguen. In that case Wurmser would need the services of every man of his army in order to protect the Empire from invasion. He would be under the necessity of recalling all the detachments he had sent north and, whatever might be the result of the struggle in Breisgau, Clerfayt, left to his own resources, would probably be driven to the Danube by Jourdan.

But no plans involving offensive operations beyond the Rhine commended themselves to Pichegru. He

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and Jourdan, on October 4, had an interview near Mainz, at which several of the representatives of the people, attached to their respective armies, were present. No vigorous measures, however, resulted from their deliberations. The instructions of the Committee of Public Safety, prescribing that the reduction of Mainz must be looked upon as the primary object of the campaign, furnished Pichegru with an excellent excuse for remaining upon the defensive. When Jourdan enquired what assistance he could expect from him, he insisted that all the troops he had in hand at Mannheim were needed to cover the siege operations. If that were so, answered Jourdan, he must abandon the idea of attacking the Austrians upon the Main. Nevertheless, he would be prepared to move up the right bank of that river and threaten Clerfayt's communications in the direction of Aschaffenburg. This suggestion, however, found no favour in the eyes of his fellow general. In those circumstances, he pointed out, Clerfayt would certainly make a determined attempt to raise the siege of Mainz. Moreover, in order to reach Aschaffenburg Jourdan would be obliged to violate the line of neutrality. Would it be politic, he asked, to risk a rupture with Prussia, at the moment when the Convention was confronted by grave internal difficulties? Nor did Pichegru evince any eagerness to assume the supreme command, which the Committee of Public Safety had decreed was to devolve upon him, whenever the armies of the Rhine and of the Sambre and Meuse should be engaged upon combined operations. On the contrary, he declared that it would be most injudicious to concentrate the direction of affairs in his hands, so long as he and his colleague were able to act together in perfect harmony. Finally, it was resolved that Jourdan should remain immovable upon the Main and at the same time have charge of the investment of Mainz, Pichegru undertaking to occupy the attention

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of the enemy by demonstrations both at Mannheim and upon the Upper Rhine.¹

On the occasion of this conference, Jourdan, it is plain, showed himself almost as adverse as Pichegru to the adoption of bold measures. It is possible, however, that some suspicion of that general's treasonable designs may have been present in his mind. In any case he was, doubtless, soon satisfied that the commander of the Army of the Rhine had no intention of co-operating heartily in any offensive plan of campaign. Meanwhile, the Austrian generals, encouraged by the unexpected immobility of their enemies, were preparing to advance. Wurmser would not appear to have been deceived in the slightest degree by Pichegru's feeble attempts to distract his attention. Being satisfied that the French had no intention of invading Breisgau, he proceeded to transfer the greater part of his troops from the Upper Rhine to the country between the Neckar and the Main. Assured of support from his fellow-general, Clerfayt, yielding to the instances of Craufurd, agreed to press Jourdan vigorously.

It is impossible to determine whether the Austrian staff was aware that Pichegru was in correspondence with Condé. Most certainly, at this period, the French prince had not divulged his secret to either of the Imperial generals. Having good reason to suppose that the Court of Vienna purposed to indemnify itself for the expenses of the war by acquiring either the whole, or part, of Alsace, he was particularly anxious to exclude the Austrians, as long as possible, from participation in the arrangements he hoped to make with Pichegru. Considerations such as these, however, are not likely to have deterred Colonel Craufurd from imparting to them the information. It was a genuine subject for regret to British ministers that Austria should be thus credited with the intention of annexing

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 82-86.

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a French province. Nevertheless, it may be presumed that Mr. Pitt would not have been greatly disturbed to discover that the Bourbons, were the Republic to be overthrown, would have to submit to some loss of territory on their eastern frontier. But he and his principal colleagues were thoroughly alive to the necessity of loudly repudiating the idea that they entertained sentiments of that nature. Wickham, and those who were in a position to gauge public opinion, could perceive clearly that the suspicion that the allied sovereigns were proposing to dismember France was a source of strength to the revolutionary government.¹ The notion that the integrity of their country was bound up in the existence of the Republic induced many Frenchmen, who disliked the *régime*, to support it from patriotic motives. But at this moment, when Craufurd was engaged in urging Marshal Clerfayt to attack Jourdan upon the Main, it is most improbable that he refrained from telling him that Pichegru was a secret partisan of the Bourbons. It is difficult to conceive a more cogent argument in favour of vigorous action than that the commander of the Army of the Rhine was ill-disposed towards the Republic and would, therefore, be unlikely to afford his brother general any effectual support. In none of his letters or despatches, however, does he state explicitly that he made any communication of that nature to the Austrian generals or their staffs. On the other hand, he never says that he refrained from revealing to them that the Republican general was corresponding clandestinely with the Prince de Condé. On the contrary, in one despatch, part of which has already been quoted, he expresses himself in a manner which rather implies that the Austrians had been initiated into the secret.

Speaking of Pichegru's conduct during the campaign, he describes it as having raised "our hopes of

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 203-206.

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his sincerity.”¹ It would be interesting to know to whom the word “our” refers. When he wrote it, he was at the headquarters of Marshal Clerfayt in the district between the Main and the Lahn. Was he alluding merely to Wickham, who was in Switzerland more than one hundred miles away? Was he thinking simply of his brother Robert, who was his companion and assistant at the time? Is it not on the whole more probable that he was referring to Clerfayt and his Chief of the Staff, with whom he was in the daily habit of conferring upon the situation?

Be the reasons what they may, the Austrian plans, at the beginning of October, 1795, were unquestionably conceived in a bolder spirit than had hitherto characterized their proceedings. The wide enveloping movement, for the purpose of dislodging Jourdan from his position upon the Main, which Clerfayt had been preparing for some time past, was begun on October 9, and proved completely successful. The Army of the Sambre and Meuse, in face of the resolute advance of the Austrians, fell back to the Lahn, and from the banks of that river retreated hastily across the Rhine, abandoning the siege works at Ehrenbreitstein and those thrown up on the right bank opposite Mainz. Meanwhile, Pichegru was still inactive at Mannheim, where Fauche-Borel had arrived, on October 10, bringing with him Wickham's money. Two days later, Condé's agent, who had placed himself in communication with Badonville, obtained an interview with the commanding general. Pichegru assured him that he was still of the same mind and that his views had not changed. Fauche, however, was greatly struck by his anxious and careworn expression.² In truth, no man had better cause than he to appear troubled and depressed. He

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 6, Craufurd to Grenville, October 18, 1795.

² Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 273-274.

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had just learnt that the Army of the Sambre and Meuse was in full retreat and that the prospects of the campaign were hopelessly compromised. To serve his secret political ends, he had deliberately allowed the opportunity to escape of dividing the Austrian armies and of carrying the Republican flag into the heart of the Empire. But the news which he had received from Paris must have brought home to him the unpleasant conviction that he had thrown away to no purpose the chance of winning honourable distinction. The insurrection of the *sections*, upon which he founded all his hopes, had come to pass, and the issue had falsified his anticipations.

The Constitution, known as that of the Year III, which was to impose upon France the *régime* of the Directory, had, during the summer of 1795, been submitted to a *plébiscite* and accepted by an overwhelming majority. It had not, however, escaped the penetration of the dominant faction that, were the selection of the deputies, who were to sit in the two new assemblies, to be left to the free choice of the electorate, a majority would very probably be returned consisting, if not of actual Royalists, of persons of very moderate Republican opinions. It had, accordingly, been enacted that two-thirds of the deputies in the Council of the 500 and that of the *Ancients* must be members of the old Convention. This decree, when referred to the people, was accepted, but only by a small majority. Thereupon, the so-called *moderate* party, which was largely represented in the ranks of the national guard and upon the committees of the forty-eight *sections*, into which revolutionary Paris was divided, resolved to appeal to arms, rather than submit to so flagrant a violation of its electoral rights.

On October 2, 1795, 32 of the 48 *sections* formally declared themselves in insurrection and called upon the people to rise in defence of their

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rights. The Convention, thus threatened, sent for the nearest regular troops and proceeded to arm its supporters. By these means some 10,000 men were collected and placed under the command of General Menou, who, on the evening of October 4, was directed to surround the committee rooms of the *section* Lepéletier, where a provisional government had been installed. But that officer, instead of acting vigorously, halted his column in the Rue Vivienne, and, having entered into a negotiation with the leaders he had been ordered to seize, agreed to withdraw his troops. Whether his conduct should be ascribed to secret sympathy with the enemies of the Convention, or simply to indecision of character, the triumph of the *sections* seemed now assured. It so happened, however, that a shabbily dressed young man, who had been spending his evening at the theatre, was a witness of the scene. When the troops retired, he followed them to the Tuileries and entered the hall of the Convention. After listening for a short space of time to the debate, he left the building and betook himself to the offices of the Committee of Public Safety, which he found crowded with people anxiously discussing the situation. The new-comer joined in the deliberations and, talking in a manner which attracted attention, described what he had seen and heard in the Rue Vivienne. He was desirous, he announced, of placing his services at the disposal of the Committee. He was an artillery officer, he proceeded to explain, by name Napoleon Bonaparte, for the moment unemployed, but known to Barras, who had been invested by the Convention with the supreme command of its military forces. In effect, the citizen Barras, soldier and heretofore noble, a prominent figure in the Convention ever since the overthrow of Robespierre, recollected the young artillery officer at Toulon and, apparently, thought so well of him

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that he, forthwith, appointed him his chief lieutenant. On the next day, October 5, 1795, the 13 *vendémiaire* of the year IV, according to the revolutionary calendar, when the *sections* delivered their attack upon the Convention, they were confronted by a small body of troops admirably posted and well supplied with artillery. The affair terminated very quickly. "A whiff of grape-shot" upon the quays and in the Rue Saint-Honoré sufficed to disperse in dire confusion the converging columns of the middle-class insurgents. A week later, Bonaparte was nominated to the command of the army of the interior; on October 26, the Convention dissolved itself and, on November 4, the two new assemblies selected as directors Barras, La Revellière-Lépeaux, Rewbell, Le Tourneur, and Siéyès. The last named having declined to assume office, Carnot was chosen to replace him.

In addition to the news of the defeat of the *sections*, there was a further reason for the anxiety which Fauche, on arriving at Mannheim, had observed depicted upon the countenance of Pichegru. His military situation was extremely critical now that Jourdan had retreated across the Rhine, at a point more than 100 miles distant from Mannheim. He had every reason to fear that, once they had disposed of the Army of the Sambre and Meuse, the Austrian generals would direct against him their united forces. His apprehensions were speedily realized. At daybreak, on October 18, Wurmser attacked and carried the French positions upon the Neckar and all but succeeded in gaining possession of Mannheim itself. Had not a dense fog supervened, the Austrians would seemingly have penetrated into the town at the heels of the retreating Republicans. Nor was it only at Mannheim that danger threatened. Jourdan's retreat had gravely compromised the safety of the great entrenched camp which the French had established upon the left bank

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of the Rhine opposite Mainz. Were the Austrians to capture it, they could invest Mannheim upon both sides of the river, and, in that case, Pichegru must either retreat or be enclosed within the fortress. No serious fault can be found with the plan which, in the circumstances, he submitted to the commissioners of the Convention and the Committee of Public Safety. Unless Jourdan could see his way to detach a substantial force for their defence, it were wiser, he contended, temporarily to abandon the lines at Mainz. Their evacuation, he admitted, would compel him to retire from Mannheim. But it would present the inestimable advantage of enabling him to concentrate some 40,000 men further to the rear, in the direction of Landau, where he could await in security the arrival of Jourdan upon the scene of operations. This project, however, found favour neither with the commissioners of the Convention nor with the Committee of Public Safety. Far from adopting Pichegru's views, Le Tourneur, who was in charge of the department of war, prescribed a vigorous offensive to be undertaken by both armies upon the Lower and Upper Rhine simultaneously. His detailed instructions for the guidance of the two commanding generals reached Mannheim, on October 29. But, a few hours after their arrival, the action of the Austrians vindicated Pichegru's judgment and rendered them impossible of execution. That night, Wurmser swept the French from the Galgenberg, the plateau commanding Mannheim on the east, while at Mainz a yet more signal success attended the operations of the Austrians. Issuing from the town under cover of the darkness, Clerfayt made a surprise attack upon the famous lines and expelled from them the Republicans, who in their retreat left behind over 100 guns and 2,000 unwounded prisoners.¹ These two reverses compelled Pichegru

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 105-110 and 117-118.

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to evacuate Mannheim. Confiding its defence to General Montaigne and a garrison of 10,000 men, he withdrew to the River Pfimm, some fifteen miles below the town, where he was joined by the remnants of the five divisions which had been so roughly handled by Marshal Clerfayt at Mainz.

Fauche-Borel who, as has been related, had arrived at Mannheim, on October 10, had remained there until Pichegru was obliged to retire from the town. After witnessing the first effect of the bombardment, to which it was subjected by the Austrians, directly they had captured the Galgenberg, he quitted the town in a carriage belonging, according to his own story, to Pichegru himself.¹ With the general he had, he affirms, five different interviews during his stay at Mannheim. Without doubt, he was constantly in the company of Badonville, and it may be that certain views and opinions which he alleges were expressed to him by Pichegru personally were, in reality, conveyed to him by that individual. But although words which he describes as falling directly from the mouth of the commanding general may, in point of fact, have been uttered by his staff officer, his reports probably reflect fairly accurately Pichegru's sentiments and frame of mind at this period.

Baptiste, related Fauche—for this was the name generally applied to Pichegru by Condé, Wickham and the other persons in the secret,—was animated by the most excellent intentions, but for the moment he could do nothing. Condé, he insisted, must have patience. He could commit himself to no definite course of action, nor would he fix any date for the execution of his plans. With regard to the surrender

F. O. Army in Germany 6, Craufurd to Grenville, October 30, 1795.

¹ F. O. Switzerland 14, Wickham to Grenville, January 5, 1796. "Fauche was sent away from Mannheim in Pichegru's own chaise."

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of Hüninguen, to which the Prince attached so much importance, he returned, Fauche was compelled to admit, only evasive answers.¹ Montgaillard was exasperated by this temporizing attitude to which Pichegru appeared determined to adhere. For some time past he had been racking his brains to discover some means of forcing matters to an issue. It might be, he thought, that Pichegru was waiting for Condé to cross the Rhine. But the Prince could not move without the sanction of the Austrians, and it was necessary, therefore, that they should be informed of the true state of affairs. Were they to learn that an understanding existed between His Highness and the Republican commander of the Army of the Rhine they would, doubtless, consent to assist him to reach the left bank of the river. This was the reason of the revelations which, Wickham discovered, he had made to the Austrian minister, Baron Degelman. But another device for effecting his purpose suggested itself to his fertile mind. Shortly before the arrival of Fauche at Mannheim, he appears to have entertained the idea of seeking to frighten Pichegru by means of a story that he had been waylaid by agents of the French minister, Barthélémy, and that all his papers had been taken from him. Could Pichegru be induced to believe that the government in Paris possessed evidence of his treason, he would assuredly be driven to take definite action of some kind in order to save his own neck. This plan, which to judge from his correspondence with Condé, Montgaillard was on the point of carrying out, was, however, abandoned.² Perhaps the affair of the 13 *vendémiaire*, the events of the campaign upon the Rhine, and the news that Fauche had

¹ F. O. Switzerland 12, Wickham to Grenville, October 18, 1795. *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 184 and 283-284. Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. p. 277.

² G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 98.

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safely reached Mannheim, led him to think that it would be wiser to hold in reserve this particular stratagem.

The primary object of Fauche's mission, however, was to supply Pichegru with the money which he had declared he must have before he could proclaim Louis XVIII. But, being now of opinion that his projected *pronunciamento* must be postponed, the general no longer required to have at his immediate disposal a large sum of money. He was resolved, he repeated to Fauche again and again, to have nothing to do with partial measures. He would not declare for the King, unless he were certain that his whole army was prepared to espouse the Royal cause, and, for the moment, his troops were hardly as favourably disposed as he could wish.¹ But the task of converting them to Royalist opinions could be achieved, he was convinced, without great difficulty. Pitt's gold, he considered, could not be more profitably employed than in seducing from their allegiance the soldiers of the Republic. Fauche acquiesced with the utmost alacrity. Some plan of this kind had been in his mind when, before leaving Switzerland, he had purchased a quantity of watches. Pichegru's words now opened up the prospect of practising his system of corruption upon a far grander scale than he had ever contemplated. He, accordingly, lost no time in setting about a task which appealed strongly both to his vanity and to his love of intrigue. During his stay at Mannheim, he entertained the officers of Pichegru's army with a lavish hospitality. He visited the sick and distributed among the rank and file food, drink, and new boots, taking care to impress upon all the recipients of his bounties that he was moved to indignation by the heartless indifference of the government to the wants of its brave soldiers. Nor was it only in this open and

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 279-280, 283, 284.

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direct fashion that he sought to increase their discontent. The editor of the local newspaper, the *Gazette de Deux-Ponts*, being in his pay, that journal proved a convenient vehicle for the dissemination of thinly disguised Royalist opinions.¹ There is every reason to suppose that Wickham's money was not entirely expended in vain. Among the regiments which, on the morning of October 29, so hastily retreated from the Galgenberg, there were, doubtless, many men who had enjoyed M. Fauche's liberality.

Pichegru appears to have looked upon the dissemination of counter-revolutionary pamphlets as the most effectual means of instilling hatred of the Republic into the minds of his men. Let a parcel of that kind of literature, he suggested, be sent to Madame Salomon at Blotzheim, or even to himself personally through the ordinary channels of the post, and he would undertake to distribute its contents among the troops.² It is unfortunately impossible to estimate with any degree of certainty how much of Wickham's money Pichegru retained for his own private use. In a detailed report of his different missions, which he submitted to the Prince de Condé, Fauche states that on every occasion upon which he saw him at Mannheim "he gave the banker (Pichegru) a remittance, often, also, he sent him money by Cupidon (Badonville) which was always expended in a most intelligent manner."³ This description of his pecuniary transactions with Pichegru differs somewhat from the story which, in January, 1796, he told to Colonel Craufurd. In answer to that officer's searching questions as to the manner in which he had employed the money entrusted to him, he replied "that

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. p. 278. E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, p. 377.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 185. G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 104. F. O. Switzerland 12, Wickham to Grenville, November 2, 1795.

³ E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, p. 377.

he had given but a small part to Pichegru, having distributed the rest amongst many of the officers of his army."¹ The only actual figures which throw any light upon the question are those supplied by Wickham in his account of his disbursements for secret service, during the year 1795. In the fifth column of that document appears a sum of £11,000 which, he explains, was devoted to Baptiste (Pichegru) and the agents employed in that negotiation. "I have," he goes on to assure Lord Grenville, "a very exact and I have no doubt a very faithful account of the manner in which that sum has been distributed by Fauche. About £2,500 in all has been given directly to Baptiste (Pichegru). The rest has been distributed among officers and soldiers or appropriated to the use of agents at Strasburg, Mannheim, and Basle."²

Condé's army had hitherto taken no part in the active operations of the campaign. While Wurmser and Clerfayt had been contending with the Republicans upon the Lower Rhine, the Royalists had not been allowed to move from their old station at Müllheim in Breisgau. But, on November 5, Condé was directed to make his dispositions for crossing the Rhine and for penetrating into Franche-Comté, in conjunction with an Austrian division under the command of General Melas. It has already been pointed out that it is impossible to determine whether the Imperial generals were aware of Pichegru's disaffection, at the time when they were concerting their measures for dealing with Jourdan upon the Main. Condé's motives for desiring to withhold the information from them have been explained and it has, also, been shown that Craufurd, for obvious reasons, may have decided to impart the secret to them. But if it be doubtful whether, at the end of September, they knew that Pichegru was in

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 251.

² F. O. Switzerland 17, Wickham to Grenville, May 14, 1796.

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communication with the Royalists, it is perfectly certain that, at the beginning of November, they were aware of the true state of affairs. For some little time before he directed him to prepare to cross the Rhine, Wurmser had been in communication with Condé on the subject of Pichegru. In the Prince's correspondence there are references to a certain d'Eggs, an *émigré* and a priest, who appears to have been either an intriguing busybody or possibly a secret agent of the Austrian staff. This man seems to have discovered that Pichegru was very ill-disposed towards the Republic and to have sought to obtain authority from Wurmser to enter into negotiations with him.¹ It is conceivable that the Austrian general may have found it convenient to pretend that it was d'Eggs who first informed him of Pichegru's disaffection. Be that as it may, it is clear that Condé was perfectly satisfied that neither Craufurd nor Wickham had mentioned the affair to him. Being certain that they had kept his secret religiously, "he had been very guarded," he wrote to Wickham, "in his language to Wurmser, lest, by admitting that he had acted upon their advice, he should compromise them with the Court of Vienna."²

The news that Condé was to cross the Rhine and that Wurmser had promised to facilitate his relations with Pichegru "filled Wickham's soul with joy."³ The moment had come for which he had been preparing so assiduously ever since his first arrival in Switzerland. Condé's passage of the Rhine should be, he resolved, the signal for insurrections to break out at Lyons, in the mountains of the Jura, and at Besançon. From Lausanne, which he had selected for his place of residence on account of its proximity to the frontier, he sent out instructions to his agents in

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 125-127.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 189.

³ *Ibid.*

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all directions. Pr  cy¹ was to proceed at once to Lyons to assume the command of the Royalist forces. £40,000, Wickham calculated, would be required to sustain the insurrection in that city, £10,000 would be needed at Besan  on and another £10,000 must be held in readiness to meet unforeseen demands.² The various movements were to be so arranged as to divert the attention of the Republican authorities to different points and compel them to divide their forces. Pichegru, he informed Lord Grenville in cypher, on November 18, had left only 4000 men in Franche-Comt  , "he could not with decency leave less." Danger, therefore, was to be apprehended 'only from the army in Savoy. Kellermann, its commander, had been approached by one of his agents, but "he had returned rather an evasive answer." Better success, however, had attended his efforts with certain subordinate officers. "The chief contractor and two other generals were entirely gained and Collinet, his adjutant-general, was in our pay."³

While Wickham was thus completing with feverish haste his arrangements at Lyons and in the eastern provinces, Drake, the British minister at Genoa, was busily engaged in the south. For the past three months, his numerous emissaries in Provence had been preparing the ground for a Royalist insurrection.⁴ No sooner, therefore, was he informed by Wickham that Lyons was about to rise than he sent to warn his various agents that the time had come for action. Moreover, having procured a large consignment of arms from the Sardinian government he contrived, under pretext that they were required for the British troops in Corsica, to hand them over to Captain Nelson

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 200.

² F. O. Switzerland 12, Wickham to Grenville, November 13, 1795. *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 189-196.

³ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 208.

⁴ F. O. Genoa 12, Drake to Grenville, August 9, 1795.

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for conveyance to the coast of Provence. Drake, however, was by no means so confident of success as Wickham. The Royalists of Provence, he reported to Lord Grenville, "would not move unless the signal be given at Lyons and the operations at Lyons will, in their turn, depend upon the amount of support which the Prince de Condé receives from the Court of Vienna." With regard to the dispositions of Austria, the news transmitted to him by his colleague at Turin was very far from satisfactory. Mr. Trevor had grave reason to doubt whether General Wurmser had any serious intention of affording the Prince de Conde any real assistance.¹

Wickham had no share in these apprehensions. He regretted that the Austrians had not seen fit to detach a larger body of troops to support Conde,² but the suspicion would not seem to have crossed his mind that they were secretly determined to prevent the execution of the operation for which they had themselves directed the Prince to prepare. Every moment of his time was devoted to his correspondence with his different emissaries, to the by no means easy task of collecting a large sum in hard coin and to the completion of his final arrangements. Lord Grenville, he felt sure, would excuse the brevity of his despatches. He would realize, he was convinced, that "to furnish the whole frontier with arms, powder, money and shoes, and to carry on a most extensive correspondence, without committing himself in this country or suffering his agents to be detected in the other, was more than one person could well go through."³ Nevertheless, the short communications which, at this period, he transmitted to London

¹ F. O. Genoa 13, Drake to Grenville, November 19, 1795, and November 20, 1795.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 198.

³ *Ibid.*, I. p. 197.

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breathe the utmost confidence. "Everything," he wrote on November 21, "goes on well, we have nothing to fear but a premature discovery."¹ Although there appeared to be some delay in furnishing Condé with his actual orders to pass the Rhine, he was not disturbed on that account. There were still many arrangements to be made in connection with the insurrection in the interior and it was, therefore, only prudent that the Prince should not attempt to enter Franche-Comté, until Lyons should be ready to take up arms.² He was greatly pleased with Imbert-Colomés, the former mayor of that city, who was now one of the chief Royalist conspirators. "If he and the powerful leaders of the place be not disarmed, before their project can take effect, I think it cannot fail of success."³ This was Wickham's prediction on November 23. It was the last message which he sent to London of a hopeful nature.

At the time when Condé received orders to prepare to cross the Rhine, Craufurd was at the headquarters of Marshal Clerfayt, who was advancing against the positions, which, after his withdrawal from Mannheim, Pichegru had taken up in the neighbourhood of Worms. The colonel was a man of excellent judgment and possessed the additional advantage of having had a long experience of the methods of the Imperial staff. It had not escaped him that the Austrians were particularly anxious to let it be known as widely as possible that Condé was to penetrate into Franche-Comté. At the same time, although he was well aware that the Prince was burning to be allowed to enter France, he was constantly receiving hints that His Highness was by no means very anxious to embark upon the adventure. Both these circumstances, in his

¹ F. O. Switzerland 12, Wickham to Grenville, November 21, 1795.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 207.

³ F. O. Switzerland 12, Wickham to Grenville, November 23, 1795.

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opinion, pointed to one conclusion. Condé's much-talked-of passage of the Rhine was intended by the Austrians to be merely a diversion, which should assist the operations of their armies in the Palatinate. But he was doubtful whether, having effected their purpose, they intended to countermand the expedition at the last moment, or whether they proposed that the Royalist contingent should advance unsupported into Franche-Comté and court certain destruction. Being determined to protest, should he see signs that the Austrians for their own ends were contemplating the sacrifice of Condé, he took leave of Clerfayt and set out for Switzerland to confer with Wickham and impart to him his suspicions.¹

When he arrived at Lausanne, in the evening of November 24, Craufurd found Wickham greatly disturbed by the news which he had received during the day from the frontier. Among the many adventurers, to whose impracticable schemes the Prince de Condé² was always too disposed to listen, was a certain Marquis de Bésignan. He was a heretofore *seigneur* in the department of the Drôme who, in the year 1792, had resolutely defended his *château* against the attacks of the armed peasants and local Jacobins whose enmity he had incurred. After sustaining a regular siege, he had succeeded in escaping to Switzerland, thanks to the connivance of the officer in command of the body of regular troops which had been sent to capture his stronghold. Since that time he had frequently returned to his native province where, in conjunction with Dominique Allier of sinister memory, he had organized guerilla bands and levied war against the Republican authorities.³ He had shown the utmost

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 8, Craufurd to Grenville, November 21, 1795.

² E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, p. 142.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 325-330.

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anxiety to be employed in the great conspiracy which, in the autumn of 1795, was being organized in Switzerland. Wickham, however, whether because he suspected his good faith, or whether because he looked upon him as a senseless and extravagant person, refused to entrust him with any confidential mission. Moreover, as the time for action approached, he did all in his power to prevent him from entering France. Nevertheless, in spite of all his precautions, Bésignan not only contrived to learn many of the details of the plot, but set out in person for Lyons taking with him a bundle of highly compromising documents. At the frontier he was recognized and an attempt was made to apprehend him. But having shot the *gendarme*, who sought to detain him, he made good his escape to some neighbouring woods. Unfortunately, however, although he thus succeeded in avoiding capture, he left in the hands of the police the incriminating papers which he carried with him. There was every reason to fear that this man's treachery or culpable imprudence had not only placed the Republican authorities in possession of the names of the principal conspirators at Lyons, but might involve Wickham in serious difficulties with the Helvetic Body. Bésignan, it was true, had received no letters from him. Nevertheless, Mr. Wickham had little doubt that mention of his name would be found in some of the papers which had been seized. "I sincerely hope," he wrote on November 25, "that no other evil may arise from this whole affair than the loss of the money expended."¹

Although Bésignan's papers would not appear to have contained evidence sufficient to warrant the Directory in formally complaining of the British minister's conduct to the Helvetic Body, Wickham's plans were

¹ F. O. Switzerland 12, Wickham to Grenville, November 23, 1795. *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 216-217.

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none the less completely frustrated.¹ The captured documents, if they failed to implicate him personally, were of a nature seriously to compromise Imbert Colomés and the leading conspirators. No sooner had they heard of Bésignan's adventure, than all the chief persons with whom Wickham was in communication took to flight. Nor was it only the consternation, thus aroused among his principal agents at Lyons, which abruptly put an end to all his hopes of exciting a vast insurrection against the Republic throughout the eastern provinces. Three days after he had received the news of the seizure of documents at the frontier, he learnt that Condé's projected passage of the Rhine had been countermanded.² The Prince, to his intense chagrin, had been ordered to break up his camp at Müllheim, proceed northwards and take up fresh quarters at Wisloch, in the vicinity of Heidelberg. Craufurd, it would seem, had made no mistake in supposing that the Austrians had never intended to allow the Royalists to penetrate into France. Wickham, about this time, appears to have contrived to obtain access to the secret correspondence of M. Pelin, the confidential secretary of Thugut, the Austrian Chancellor.³ In one of this man's "very private and confidential" letters he saw it plainly stated that "there had never been any intention of putting forward Condé in the campaign, or of allowing him to enter Alsace."

Meanwhile, the operations of Wurmser and of Clerfayt in the Palatinate had been attended with unbroken success. After his great victory at Mainz, on October 29, Clerfayt moved up the left bank of the Rhine towards Mannheim and, on November 10,

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 8, Craufurd to Grenville, December 9, 1795.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 217.

³ *Fortescue Papers*, III. pp. 181-182.

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engaged Pichegru upon the Pfrimm. When the Austrians advanced against him, reported Craufurd two days later, "Pichegru quitted his very advantageous position and retreated towards Frankenthal." After fighting a mere rearguard action at that last-named place he fell back to the Speyerbach from the line of which river, however, he was speedily dislodged. Nevertheless, Craufurd was strongly of opinion that he would probably make a further effort to save Mannheim. "I think," he pointed out on November 15, "that he ought to risk another battle for that purpose."¹ Pichegru, however, thought otherwise. Abandoning Mannheim to its fate, he began a retreat towards Landau with a view to establishing himself upon the banks of the river Queich. "After a siege of only twelve days of open trenches," wrote, on November 23, Robert Craufurd, who during the absence of his brother in Switzerland kept the Foreign Office informed of the progress of events, "Mannheim capitulated yesterday. The surrender came much sooner than could possibly have been expected."²

While he had been conducting these operations, Pichegru had not been without news of Condé. After leaving Mannheim, on November 1, in circumstances which have been related, Fauche had betaken himself to Strasburg. Here he appears to have made himself known to, and to have taken counsel with, a lawyer, named Demougé, who ever since the outbreak of war had been employed as a spy by the Austrian staff. In thus entering into communication with him, Fauche was acting in opposition to Condé's orders. His Highness had desired him "to be particularly mistrustful of the person known as Furet (Demougé) because he was

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 8, Craufurd to Grenville, November 15, 1795.

² *Ibid.*, November 23, 1795.

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the agent of the Austrians.”¹ Wickham, on the other hand, had been at pains to impress upon him that “a good and very confidential understanding” must be maintained with the Austrians, seeing that “nothing effective could ever be done without their assistance, and particularly he was to endeavour that his intelligence should pass through the medium of the Austrian agents, to the intent that their generals might be satisfied of the reality of the correspondence and not take it from the report of the Prince de Condé alone.” In these circumstances Fauche appears to have decided that of his two employers the one who disbursed the money was the man he should obey. Henceforward, indeed, he must be regarded rather as the agent of the British minister, than as an emissary of the Prince de Condé. Not only did he communicate freely with Demougé on the subject of the business upon which he was engaged, but, on November 18, he took him with him to Pichegru’s headquarters where, in accordance with Wickham’s wishes, he introduced him to the general as the principal agent of the Austrians at Strasburg.²

It was for the purpose of endeavouring to persuade him to deliver up Hüninguen that these two men paid their visit to Pichegru, who was engaged in superintending the withdrawal of his army from the Speyerbach to the Queich. The place in question had always been the object of Condé’s fondest desires. In his hands it would constitute a base for the invasion of Franche-Comté and, as the Austrian victories enhanced his prospects of being able to enter France, so did his longing increase to obtain possession of this fortress. Pichegru, however, on this, as on former occasions, professed his inability to comply with His Highness’ demand. Furthermore, he found grave fault with

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 284-285.

² *Ibid.*

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Fauche's conduct in thus presenting himself at his headquarters. In consequence of his long stay at Mannheim, he must be well known to many persons whose suspicions might be aroused, were they again to see him in the midst of the army. But the presence of his companion, the Austrian spy, would not seem to have excited his displeasure. Addressing himself to him, he inquired whether the Imperial generals proposed loyally to assist in bringing about the union of the Royalists and the Republicans, and whether they entertained any ideas of permanently retaining Alsace. His own troops were greatly dispirited by their reverses in action and by the hardships they had undergone in their retreat. Their loyalty to the Republic, he had no doubt, would diminish in proportion as their sufferings increased. But great as was the wretchedness of their present condition it could be aggravated by vigorous action on the part of the Austrians. Having imparted this information to his two visitors he asked some questions about the positions and movements of the Imperial armies. He desired, he gave them to understand, to be enlightened about the intentions of the Austrian generals, not in order that he might defeat their plans, but, on the contrary, in order that he might assist them to carry them out. He could not comply with the request, which Fauche had been instructed to make, that Badonville might be sent to Müllheim to confer with Condé. That officer might go to Strasburg, but he could not allow him to cross the Rhine. He consented, however, to write out and hand over to Fauche two lines in his own hand to that effect. But in drawing up this note he was careful to avoid the use of any expression which should either commit him to a definite line of action with the Royalists, or compromise him with the Republican authorities, should the document fall into their hands. "*L'associé Du Retour*" (Demougé), it ran, "must continue to keep me

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informed about the movements of the enemy. *Bille* (Badonville) can only go to Strasburg. X. (Condé) must have patience, try to keep him quiet." Lastly, Pichegru asked anxiously whether Wickham would undertake to supply him with whatever money he might require, when the moment for proclaiming the King should come. Fauche assured him he need have no uneasiness on that point, and, at the same time, offered him a considerable sum for immediate expenses. Pichegru appears to have accepted, without hesitation, the proffered donation.¹

Such was in substance the account of their interview with Pichegru, on November 20, 1795, which Fauche and Demougé submitted to their employers. The accuracy of their report might well be questioned, were it not that on subsequent occasions, in circumstances which will be related in due course, Pichegru saw fit to express himself with the same brutal frankness to other agents in the service of Mr. Wickham. He appears to have arrived at the conclusion that only by a long series of unsuccessful encounters with the enemy and by severe physical suffering could the loyalty of his troops be undermined. Obviously, however, his main purpose could not be achieved, unless he could so arrange matters that his men should ascribe their reverses and their hardships, not to the unskillfulness of their general, but to the incapacity of the central government. It is practically certain that this was the object which he had in view throughout the later stages of the campaign of 1795. His operations, he was secretly resolved, must be constantly unsuccessful, but at the same time he must contrive to preserve the confidence and affection of his troops. Thus, whenever he should decide to abandon a position, it must be made apparent to his men that it was their numerical inferiority to the enemy which obliged him to order a

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 153-158.

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retreat. Furthermore, they must be brought to believe that it was not the faulty strategy of their commander, but the incompetence of the government in Paris, which exposed them to the constant necessity of retiring from the battlefield before an adversary, which was always superior to them in point of numbers.

Pichegru appears to have carried out his cunning plan with no little success. The tactical ability which he displayed in his different rearguard actions upon the Pfrimm and upon the Speyerbach elicited the admiration of friend and foe alike.¹ Nevertheless, the effect of these skilfully executed withdrawals was to increase the distance which separated him from Jourdan, and it was only by joining hands with him that the campaign could be brought to a successful issue. In Paris the Directors perceived clearly that every effort must be made to enable Pichegru and Jourdan to combine their forces. Accordingly, towards the end of November, Moreau was instructed to relieve Jourdan of the duty of guarding the Rhine about Düsseldorf, while that general was directed to advance to the Nahe in full strength, in order to draw closer to Pichegru and threaten Clerfayt's communications with Mainz. Already Jourdan had detached Marceau in the prescribed direction and, on receipt of his orders from Paris, he proceeded to follow him with some 40,000 troops. But the Austrians lost no time in making new dispositions. Wurmser, who was now in possession of Mannheim, promptly pushed forward a considerable force from the Rhine to the high ground about Kaiserslautern. Could he carry out this movement successfully, he would be in a position to interpose between Jourdan and the Moselle. To reach Kaiserslautern, however, he must embark upon a long and dangerous flank march, inasmuch as the Army of the Rhine was concentrated upon the Queich. But it is probable that

¹ E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, p. 168.

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he considered himself justified in assuming that Pichegru would not take this opportunity of striking at the flank which, with seeming recklessness, he thus proposed to expose to attack. Without doubt, no definite understanding to that effect existed between them. But it must be borne in mind that the Austrian commanders had assuredly received from their spy, Demougé, a detailed account of his conversation with the Republican general, on November 20. It may be, therefore, that Wurmser was of opinion that the risk attending the operation was, on this occasion, more apparent than real. If this were his calculation, the event was to vindicate his judgment. His march from the Rhine to the hills began on November 27 and was not concluded until December 6. But, during all those nine days, Pichegru remained motionless upon the Queich and allowed his enemy to pass unmolested across his front.¹

Wurmser's flank march placed Jourdan, who by this time had reached the Nahe, in serious jeopardy. Assailed upon his left and centre by Clerfayt and threatened upon his right by Wurmser, he had no alternative but to retreat, unless he should receive succour from the Army of the Rhine. Pichegru could not venture altogether to disregard his fellow general's appeal for help, nor was it his policy openly to disobey the orders which had been sent him from Paris. Accordingly, on December 10, he quitted his positions on the Queich and advanced against Wurmser. But this operation was begun too late and was, moreover, carried out with too little spirit to afford any real relief to Jourdan, who was obliged to abandon the line of the Nahe and to withdraw behind the Moselle. Pichegru, in these circumstances, did not persevere with his offensive movement. After fighting an unsuccessful action at Kaiserslautern, he,

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 159.

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also, retreated and returned to his old positions upon the Queich.¹

Thus, at the close of the year 1795, Clerfayt and Wurmser were firmly established upon the left bank of the Rhine, between the two French armies which were once more widely separated from each other. The Austrians, however, were exhausted by their exertions and had suffered no less than the Republicans from the inclemency of the weather. Both generals were, in consequence, disposed to think that they had achieved sufficient for the present and that the time had come for withdrawing into winter-quarters. A proposal for a suspension of hostilities was, therefore, made to Jourdan who accepted it readily, stipulating only that the Army of the Rhine must be included in it. It was not in accordance with Pichegru's secret plans to allow his men to recover from their hardships and fatigues, nevertheless, after some hesitation, he agreed to the Austrian proposal. On the last day of the year 1795 an armistice was, accordingly, concluded, both sides engaging to give ten days' notice before beginning hostilities afresh.

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 8, Craufurd to Grenville, December 9, 21, 1795.

CHAPTER V

PICHEGRU SUPERSEDED

IT will be remembered that when Condé's orders to cross the Rhine were cancelled, he was directed to move down the right bank of the river and take up fresh quarters near Heidelberg. His disappointment at being thus compelled to abandon his projected incursion into Franche-Comté had, however, been greatly diminished by certain intelligence which reached him as he was upon the point of setting out. The garrison of Strasburg, his agents reported, was very weak, and the townspeople, many of whom were in communication with the Royalists of Lyons, were most favourably disposed. In order to gain the new station which the Austrian staff had prescribed for his occupation, Condé would necessarily have to pass within a few miles of the town. If the news were true about the strength of the garrison, and the sentiments of the inhabitants, his presence in the vicinity of Strasburg was an opportunity, not to be lost, of taking possession of this important fortress in the name of Louis XVIII. His Highness, as was his wont, readily believed these stories, and his northward march, upon which he had embarked so reluctantly, henceforward assumed in his eyes the character of a most fortunate development. He at once imparted the good news to Wickham, reminding him that he should, doubtless, require his financial assistance. Furthermore, he sent to Mannheim to

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apprise General Wurmser of the state of affairs and to beg that he might be allowed to halt near Strasburg, and that some 10,000 or 12,000 Austrian troops might be held in readiness to support him.

It was essential, however, that Pichegru¹ should be induced to regard the affair with a favourable eye, and Condé, therefore, directed Montgaillard to sound him upon the subject. That individual who, in spite of Wickham's warning, still enjoyed the complete confidence of His Highness, lost no time in furnishing his agents at Strasburg with instructions to the desired effect. On the last occasion on which he had seen him, Pichegru had objected to Fauche's presence at his headquarters on the ground that his constant visits could not fail to excite suspicion. For that reason, and because the affair could not be carried out without the participation of the Austrians, it was decided that their chief spy, Demougé, should proceed alone to Pichegru's headquarters. Demougé departed, accordingly, and, on December 5, had a private interview with the general. Pichegru, however, when Condé's project was confided to him, held the same evasive language about Strasburg which he had always employed, whenever he had been approached about Hüninguen. He declined to promise actively to assist the Prince's designs and contented himself with expressing a pious wish in favour of the success of the enterprise. But there were greater difficulties to be overcome, he pointed out, than His Highness appeared to realize and he therefore felt some reluctance in counselling him to embark upon the affair. In other quarters, moreover, Condé's great design for obtaining possession of Strasburg failed to elicit the approval, which he had confidently expected it would enlist. Bellegarde, the chief of Wurmser's staff, after listening with

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 224-227.

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ill-concealed incredulity to the story unfolded by the Prince's emissary, declared that no Austrian troops could be spared for an enterprise of that kind.¹ Nevertheless, he gave His Highness permission to suspend his march and to halt for the present at Bühl, about 15 miles below Strasburg. Craufurd appears to have been hardly less sceptical than the Austrian staff. To all Condé's appeals for money and to all his assurances that the surrender of Strasburg could be reduced to a certainty he turned a deaf ear.²

Condé, however, did not abandon hope and, on December 14, Demougé was despatched upon a second mission to the Republican general. Before establishing himself for the winter, the Prince desired to consult Pichegru about the locality in which he should take up his quarters. Should he remain upon the right bank of the Rhine, or should he cross the river and endeavour to draw closer to the French outposts? Having ascertained Pichegru's opinion upon that point, Demougé was to revert to the question of Strasburg. The Prince, he was to explain, was reluctant lightly to abandon so promising an affair. With the connivance of the governor of the fortress and of the generals commanding the chief posts in the neighbourhood, and, with Pichegru's assistance, these officers might assuredly be gained over, it would be a simple matter to introduce the Royalists and the Austrians into the town. A real or a feigned attack might at the same time be made upon the French positions upon the Queich. Thus Pichegru would be placed between two fires and would be enabled to demonstrate to his officers that only by declaring for

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 165.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 249. F. O. Army in Germany 9, Craufurd to Grenville, January 16, 1796, enclosing letter to Condé dated December 15, 1795.

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the King could he save his army from complete destruction.

Pichegru appears to have displayed some reluctance in acceding to the request for a second interview. He was closely watched, Badonville assured Demougé, and had, in consequence, to be very careful about receiving strange visitors. Nevertheless, on December 9, he consented to meet and to confer with the Austrian spy in a room occupied by Badonville. On this occasion Demougé took notes of the conversation, in the course of which Pichegru set forth at length his views. France, he declared emphatically, was tired of the revolutionists and of their methods. Hence the unpopularity of the Directors and their ministers, all of whom had been members of the Committee of Public Safety. Public opinion, he repeated, had brought about and had supported the revolution, and, at no distant date, public opinion would make the counter-revolution. The Directory must inevitably succumb under the weight of its own unpopularity. Only victories in the field could prolong its existence, and during the campaign upon the Rhine fortune had not smiled upon the arms of the Republic. Let the Prince de Condé, therefore, renounce all idea of taking possession of Strasburg in the manner he proposed. Should the affair lead to any loss of life it would shock public opinion and assuredly strengthen the position of the Directory. Instead of seeking to capture a French fortress, he would advise His Highness to cross the Rhine and place himself in touch with his outposts along the Queich, in order to prepare the way for the eventual union of their two armies under the same flag. Let the Republican troops be pressed as vigorously as possible by the Austrians, but let them constantly receive friendly and sympathetic messages from their Royalist compatriots. "We are all Frenchmen, let us unite." This was the language which he could wish

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that Condé's people would hold, whenever they should have an opportunity of communicating with their Republican fellow countrymen.

This judicious advice was most unpalatable to Condé. The doctrine that the counter-revolution must be the expression of the popular will was not one to which the Bourbon prince was prepared to subscribe. Nor was he disposed to concur with the idea that, refraining from any act of direct hostility against the Republic, he should encourage his troops to fraternize with the patriots. Nevertheless, greatly as he disliked Pichegru's opinions, he felt constrained to make them known to Wurmser. To his secret relief, however, the Austrian general, who had been enjoined by his Court on no account to allow the *émigrés* to cross the Rhine, declined to permit him to establish himself in winter quarters upon the left bank of the river and directed him to remain for the present at Bühl. This decision gave Condé the utmost satisfaction. It enabled him, without fear of giving offence to Pichegru, to disregard his very distasteful advice upon the plea that the Austrians refused to sanction his passage of the river.¹ Bühl, moreover, where he was ordered to take up his winter quarters, was most conveniently situated for carrying on his correspondence with Strasburg. Unfortunately, however, a serious misadventure befell M. Fauche, his chief agent in the town, at the very moment when the truce was upon the point of being concluded.

Ever since his arrival at Strasburg, at the beginning of November, Fauche had been very busy. Having in accordance with Wickham's instructions entered into relations with Demougé, Wittersbach and the other spies employed by the Austrians, he had been initiated into the secrets of their correspondence. It was the practice of these persons to entrust their reports,

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 172-178.



FAUCHE - BOREL

From an engraving

PICHEGRU SUPERSEDED

concealed in *pâtés de foie gras*, to smugglers who carried them across the river to Offenburg, where they were deciphered and sent to their destination by another Austrian agent, the Baronne de Reich.¹ This woman, an elderly adventuress who was said to have been the mistress of the Cardinal de Rohan,² the famous dupe of Madame de Lamotte in the affair of the diamond necklace, appears from this time forward to have been allowed £8 a month by Mr. Wickham³ and to have been the chief channel of communication between Condé and his agents at Strasburg. But Fauche had other occupations than those connected with the transmission across the Rhine of his correspondence. At Strasburg he diligently carried on the system of corruption which he had begun to practise at Mannheim. Besides expending Wickham's money in entertainments to the officers of the garrison, he set up a shop, where soldiers were supplied on credit and at very low prices with boots, shoes and other useful articles. It may readily be believed, as he himself ingenuously points out, that he soon had a large number of customers upon his books. Nor is it surprising that in a frontier fortress in time of war the attention of the authorities should have been attracted to a business conducted upon these generous lines. On the night of December 21, when he returned to his inn, Fauche was arrested by the town major on a charge of espionage, deprived of his papers and conveyed to prison under an escort of *gendarmes*.⁴

As he was led off to gaol Fauche could derive some comfort from the fact that, that very morning, he had handed over to Demougé a bundle of incriminating papers. But his satisfaction was marred by the

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 288-289.

² E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, p. 285.

³ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 200 (note).

⁴ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 285-287 and 297.

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recollection that in a secret pocket of his writing-case reposed a letter from the Prince de Condé. Should that document be discovered it would, indeed, go hard with him. Only the day before, he had beguiled his leisure in watching the execution of an *émigré*, and to reach the military prison he was now obliged to pass the place where the *guillotine* awaited its next victim. To a man in his position the vision which it conjured up was necessarily most distressing, and, in addition, he was forced to listen to the gibes of the policemen, and to their unfeeling allusions to the fate which they predicted was in store for him. On arriving at the Pont Couvert he was cast into a damp and filthy cell and left to his meditations. But, the next morning, he succeeded in obtaining an interview with the head jailer, an old soldier who had fallen upon evil days, after having, at one period of the revolution, risen to the rank of a brigadier-general. He was visibly impressed by his prisoner's command of money and by the copious meal which he ordered from a neighbouring *restaurateur* and which he invited him to share. Unbending under the influence of a generous repast, he poured out the story of his grievances and misfortunes. Fauche not only listened and sympathized, but expressed his determination to assist him if possible. It was for the purpose, he told him, of setting up as a publisher that he had come to Strasburg, and he was, consequently, desirous of discovering an honest and intelligent person who could act as his manager. Perceiving from the man's demeanour that he could safely make the proposal, he, forthwith, suggested that he should relinquish his present duties and accept the more honourable and lucrative employment which he had it in his power to offer him. The delighted turn-key required no pressing, and, the bargain being concluded, Fauche, in proof of good faith, placed in his hands a quarter's salary in advance.

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Henceforward M. Fauche was as comfortably lodged as circumstances would permit and was treated with every consideration. So popular did he become with all the inmates of the gaol that he felt certain that, were he to be condemned, prisoners and jailers would combine to assist him to escape. His fate was decided on the third day of his confinement, when he was removed from prison and conveyed to his inn, in order that he might be present at the examination of his papers. It was an exciting moment when the case containing Condé's letter was over-hauled. But his fears were speedily set at rest. The compromising document was not discovered, and, having answered the questions put to him to the satisfaction of the investigating magistrate, he was discharged from arrest. That evening he relates that he attended a party at the house of General Vernier, whom he describes as the commandant of the fortress, and was formally introduced to Pichegru. "I congratulate you upon your release," said the commander-in-chief, gravely; "you have acquired the rights of a French citizen." Before returning home he had the further satisfaction of winning at cards twenty-five *louis* in gold and 40,000 *francs* in *assignats* from Colonel Davoust, the future marshal of the Empire.¹

In his *Mémoires* Fauche ascribes the very fortunate circumstance of Condé's letter having been overlooked, when his papers were examined, to the interposition of Providence. Pichegru, although he sent Badonville to advise him as to the line of defence he should set up, did not interfere personally on his behalf, being confident that he would "die without betraying his secret."² But at the time he told a different story to Wickham

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 298-308.

² *Ibid.*, I. pp. 306-307; M. Caudrillier, *Trahison*, p. 189, discredits Fauche's statement that Pichegru sent Badonville to Strasburg to assist him. Badonville, he maintains, did not arrive at Strasburg until after Fauche's release.

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and to Craufurd. It was solely to the direct intervention of Pichegru, he assured them, that he owed his release. Of these two versions it is probable that the account to be found in his *Mémoires* is the more correct. Without doubt, the case against him was not pressed with any vigour. The report of his examination¹ makes it clear that no really searching questions were addressed to him by the investigating magistrate. Nevertheless, it is probable that the apathetic fashion in which the proceedings were conducted was due rather to Wickham's gold, which Fauche had diffused around him so profusely, than to the occult influence of the commander of the army. Obviously it would have been an act of extreme imprudence on Pichegru's part to have bestirred himself on behalf of a suspected spy, whom many persons might have observed in the neighbourhood of his headquarters at Mannheim and other places. He had much less to fear from any revelations the man might make, than from the suspicions which would be aroused, were he to appear to take any interest in his fate. Should he be condemned and should he seek to save his life by disclosing his relations with the commanding general, his story would be looked upon simply as an impudent attempt to impose upon the credulity of the authorities.

But, although Pichegru had, doubtless, determined to refrain from intervening in the affair, Fauche's arrest cannot have failed to cause him the keenest anxiety. No sooner, consequently, was he set at liberty than he conveyed to him a strong hint that he would do well to leave Strasburg as speedily as possible. Fauche had no desire to remain, but he was afraid that too precipitate a departure might arouse suspicion. For the purpose of giving colour to the story that it was his intention to

¹ The official report of the proceedings is to be found in F. O. Switzerland 16, Wickham to Grenville, March 17, 1796. In this despatch he quotes Fauche as saying that his release was due to Pichegru's direct interference.

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establish himself in business in the town, he, shortly after his release, actually bought the confiscated house of an *émigré*, a transaction which converted the British government into a purchaser of national property upon the territory of the Republic. Having concluded the affair by the payment of an instalment of the sum demanded, and having announced to all his acquaintances that he must go to Switzerland for a few days on business, he prepared to depart. Condé, however, still clung to the hope that Strasburg would be delivered up to him, and still continued to urge his agents to lose no opportunity of discussing the matter with Pichegru. Fauche, therefore, on January 7, 1796, before finally leaving Strasburg, drove out with Demougé to Illkirch, whither Pichegru had returned, directly the terms of the armistice had been settled.

Pichegru, on this occasion, would seem to have given vent to opinions substantially the same as those which he had expressed to Demougé, on December 20. Condé, he insisted, must have patience, public opinion was growing more and more hostile to the Directory, and no good results could be obtained by partial measures. But, having repeated all his old arguments against precipitate action, he turned to Fauche and asked whether the British minister would still undertake to supply the needs of his army, should he at any moment decide to declare against the Republic.¹ Moreover, in addition to the solicitude which he thus expressed about the wants of his troops, he seems to have enjoined Fauche to obtain from Mr. Wickham a positive assurance that he would be generously treated by the British government, should he be denounced to the Directory, and should he, in consequence, be compelled to fly.² If it be true that he did cause a

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 309-312. E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, pp. 381-387.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 289.

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message of this kind to be conveyed to Wickham, it is clear that he must have been somewhat uneasy upon his own account, and the question, therefore, arises whether, at this period, he was already an object of suspicion to the men in power in Paris.

The Republican government, as may be supposed, was very far from satisfied with the manner in which the campaign had been conducted. As far back as the beginning of November, upon receipt of the news of the loss of the lines at Mainz, it had been decided to supersede Pichegru. But Klèber, who had been selected to take his place, had declined to assume so difficult a command, and no other officer appears to have been given the opportunity of undertaking the task which he had refused to perform. Notwithstanding that the correspondence with Klèber had been of a strictly confidential character, indiscretions were committed, and the intention of the government became known, not only to Pichegru but to Craufurd, who, on December 9, reported to Grenville that "Pichegru was to be replaced by Klèber, so that we shall probably be deprived of the important services he seemed disposed to render us."¹ On learning that the government was meditating his supersession, Pichegru appears to have considered it politic at once to transmit to Paris a request to be relieved of his command, on the grounds that he had exhausted his good fortune and that he was in bad health. In the course of the last six weeks of the campaign, he, on several occasions, renewed his demand. It was not, however, until December 23 that the Directors decided to accept his resignation and to send him to Constantinople as ambassador to the Porte. But no sooner had they taken this resolution than the news arrived of the conclusion of the armistice. Hostilities being temporarily

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 8, Craufurd to Grenville, December 9, 1795.

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suspended, they determined to rescind their decision immediately to recall him and to leave him at his post for the present.¹

It would seem, therefore, that, at the close of the year 1795, the Directors entertained no suspicion of Pichegru's loyalty to the Republic. They were clearly of opinion that in the operations in the Rhine valley he had not acted up to the high reputation he had achieved in former campaigns, but the course they pursued suggests that they can scarcely have looked upon him as a traitor. The papers seized upon Bésignan had disclosed the existence of a vast Royalist conspiracy, the ramifications of which extended throughout the eastern provinces. It is difficult to believe that, even during the truce with the Austrians, they would have allowed him to exercise his command in these disaffected districts had they suspected that he was in league with Condé and with Wickham, whom they were already beginning to regard as the most dangerous and the most odious agent of Mr. Pitt. On the other hand, the report of the Austrian, Baron Vincent, who visited Pichegru's head-quarters in order to negotiate the armistice, suggests that the general, at the close of the campaign, was already regarded with suspicion by the representatives of the people attached to his army. This officer, a far more trustworthy witness than Fauche and the other individuals who had hitherto been engaged in this business, carried with him into the French lines an autograph letter from His Highness to the Republican commander. Vincent appears to have reached the headquarters of the Army of the Rhine, while it was retreating to the Queich, about ten o'clock at night. He found the general, he told Craufurd, lying upon the floor in his clothes, booted and spurred, surrounded by four officers

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 150, 151, and 182-187.

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of his staff. With the exception of Pichegru himself they were men of "low appearance" and of coarse and boorish habits. In all respects he considered that they compared very unfavourably with the members of Jourdan's staff.¹ He was allowed to remain about a week in the French lines and few precautions appear to have been taken to prevent him from obtaining information. But, although he was subjected to none of those restrictions which, in these days, would certainly be imposed upon an officer engaged upon such a mission, he, nevertheless, experienced the greatest difficulty in obtaining a word in private with Pichegru, so close was the watch set upon the commanding general by the commissioners of the government. Once only, during his sojourn at his headquarters, was he left alone with him, and, on that occasion, he promptly placed Condé's letter in his hands. Pichegru read it through carefully, and then assured the Austrian officer that his sentiments remained the same, but that he could do nothing for the present. He had no one in whom he could confide, and his troops were not rightly disposed. At that moment they were interrupted and no opportunity afterwards occurred of resuming the conversation.²

About a week after the departure of Fauche-Borel, an event occurred which made a considerable impression upon Pichegru and very probably may have caused the central government to exercise greater vigilance over the proceedings of its generals upon the eastern frontier. It has already been mentioned that Wickham's agents had been particularly active at Besançon. Ferrand, the commanding general, appears to have acted in very much the same way as Pichegru and to have entered into clandestine relations with the

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 9, Craufurd to Grenville, January 3, 1796.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 305 and 327. F. O. Switzerland 17, Wickham to Grenville, April 7, 1796.

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emissaries of the British minister. But, as usually happened in these affairs in which the *émigrés* were concerned, indiscretions were committed and information was brought to the Directory that the Royalists, in conjunction with certain officers of the garrison, were plotting to gain possession of the citadel. In these circumstances Ferrand, to save his own neck, promptly denounced his former accomplices and handed them over to justice. But, in spite of the zeal which he thus displayed in unmasking the conspirators, he appears to have failed to satisfy his government of the rectitude of his previous conduct. He was, accordingly, placed in arrest and conveyed to Paris to answer to the charges it was purposed to bring against him.¹

Ferrand was well known to, if not a personal friend of, Pichegru, and his misadventure appears to have disturbed him greatly. Their cases were very similar. At any moment the fate which had befallen the commandant at Besançon might overtake him. Many persons must be aware of his relations with Condé and with Wickham and some of them, without doubt, were as foolish and as careless as those with whom Ferrand had been associated. In spite of all his caution and his prudence his life and reputation were, he saw it now too plainly, at the mercy of men who could not be trusted to behave with ordinary circumspection.² Meanwhile, he remained secluded in his headquarters at Illkirch drinking hard,³ if the stories are to be believed which were, at a later date, circulated to his discredit. Be that as it may, on January 19, 1796, he wrote to Paris reminding the Directory that he had several times asked to be relieved of his command and applying urgently for leave of absence.⁴

¹ F. O. Switzerland 14, Wickham to Grenville, January 26, 1796.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 257. G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 221.

³ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 222.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

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After parting with Badonville, who appears to have accompanied him to the French advanced posts, Fauche made haste to render his report and to retail his adventures to Condé and to Wickham. Moreover, either at Mannheim or in Condé's camp at Bühl, he had a long interview with Craufurd. The colonel was perhaps somewhat influenced by the scepticism which the Austrians affected about Pichegru's "good intentions." The military conduct of that general constituted, Craufurd considered, no positive proof of his Royalist sympathies. His reluctance to co-operate heartily with Jourdan during the recent campaign was consistent with his supposed secret intentions, but it might be attributed equally well, he maintained, "to jealousy, to disgust, or to disapprobation of the plan."¹ The colonel was not disposed to place great trust in M. Fauche and was, consequently, very glad of this opportunity of questioning him closely. His answers he purposed to send to Mr. Wickham, in order that that gentleman should compare them with the statements made to him. Thus, he hoped, they would be enabled "to form a better judgment of his veracity and of the dependence to be placed upon him."²

Fauche's replies, Craufurd considered, were very far from satisfactory. To certain of his questions, it was true, he returned answers which displayed so much military knowledge that the colonel was disposed to think that they might be a faithful reproduction of Pichegru's statements. On the other hand, however, he detected him in several inaccuracies. He could scarcely believe the story that Pichegru had allowed him "to distribute money in his army." Would not the circumstance, he asked Wickham, "of a Swiss merchant living about Pichegru's headquarters and

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 9, Craufurd to Grenville, January 16, 1796.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 248.

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giving money upon any pretext whatever cause suspicion. . . ." In short, he felt many doubts respecting the affair. But "whether the suspicions ought to fall upon the accuracy of the Prince of Condé and of Fauche, or whether upon the reality of Pichegru's good intentions, must be decided by Mr. Wickham, who possessed better information than he had on that subject."¹

Wickham, at this time, had grave cause for anxiety. Not only had his most carefully devised plans miscarried, but the discovery of the plot at Besançon had led the French government to address an angry protest to the Helvetic Body on the subject of his proceedings.² Only two months before, the Chevalier d'Artès, one of his principal agents, had been expelled from the town of Basle at the instance of the French minister.³ More recently still, in connection with this same d'Artès, he had made a most unpleasant discovery. Facts had come to his knowledge proving that the trust he had, hitherto, reposed in him had been singularly misplaced. The Directory had seen fit to publish in the press the correspondence of a certain Lemaitre, a Royalist agent in Paris, who had been implicated in the affair of the *sections* and had suffered death in consequence. Among the letters thus made public were several from d'Artès, who invariably spoke of the British government, which employed him, in terms of the bitterest hatred. To Mr. Pitt he, on all occasions, ascribed the most Machiavellian designs, and declared that the disaster at Quiberon had filled the hearts of English ministers with joy. "I had sometimes suspected," wrote Wickham to Grenville, "that he communicates matter to the French princes which he suppressed from me, but I was far from

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 249-252.

² F. O. Switzerland 14, Wickham to Grenville, January 28, 1796. *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 254-255.

³ F. O. Switzerland 10, Wickham to Grenville, November 2, 1795.

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suspecting him of such deep ingratitude and such cool, deliberate falsehood and deceit.”¹

To add to his other troubles and perplexities Craufurd now wrote suggesting that the alleged “good intentions” of Pichegru, from which so much had been expected, might have no real existence, and that the whole affair might not improbably prove to have been a mystification. It was a matter which must be cleared up without delay. He, accordingly, subjected M. Fauche, upon his arrival, to a searching cross-examination and carefully compared his statements with those he had previously made to Craufurd. Fauche, he soon perceived, was not a man who attached any importance to dates, but his reports of his conversations with General Pichegru were, he was satisfied, substantially accurate. Nevertheless, Wickham was ready to admit that there “were many things which seemed to him strange, contradictory, and almost unaccountable.” But he had recently had the advantage of conversing with General Danican, a heretofore Jacobin, who had been converted to Royalist opinions and who had commanded the *sections* in their attack upon the Convention. After the failure of that enterprise he had contrived to escape to Switzerland, where he had received pecuniary assistance from Wickham.² “He has convinced me,” wrote Wickham, “that many things that I had thought absolutely incredible, particularly in what related to the way of living, the poverty, the strange *propos*, etc., of the general officers, are quite common in the Republican army.” It was a strong corroboration of the truth of

¹ F. O. Switzerland 13, Wickham to Grenville, December 22, 1795.

² F. O. Switzerland 14, Wickham to Grenville, March 2, 1796. “. . . His information should be valuable. I have sent him with a passport under the name of Baretto to Cuxhaven to await your Lordship's orders. I should add that he is in many respects a thorough *sans-culottes* in his manner and conversation, and that it will be necessary now and then to make him recollect that he is no longer a general.”

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Fauche's stories that he should be aware of Baron Vincent's conversation with Pichegru. Pichegru, Fauche declared, had told him that "he had had a direct communication with the Austrians near Landau." Now Vincent's visit to the headquarters of the Army of the Rhine and his delivery to the commanding general of Condé's letter were incontrovertible facts, which Fauche could scarcely have learnt from any one but Pichegru himself. He was, therefore, "strongly disposed to place confidence in Fauche." At the same time, however, he recommended Craufurd to ask General Klinglin, who had charge of the intelligence branch of the Austrian staff, to let him see the reports which he had received from the spy, Demougé, in order that he should judge how far they tallied with Fauche's accounts of their joint proceedings.¹ From a note in his handwriting in the margin of the copy of his letter to Craufurd, it appears that Wickham, for his part, took steps to intercept the correspondence of these two men, and the contents of their letters seem to have "satisfied him of the *bona fides* of their relations with Pichegru." In one of them he was interested to observe that Demougé was of opinion that, were the Court of Vienna to learn that the British minister was concerned in the transaction, "he would be instructed, if not to betray Baptiste (Pichegru), at least to counteract the success of the whole affair."²

At his last interview with Fauche, Pichegru had charged him to obtain from Mr. Wickham an assurance to which he attached great importance. He wished the British minister to guarantee to provide for the wants of his army, should he at any moment decide to declare for the King, and, on his own account, he desired to know whether he could depend upon the

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 279-287.

² F. O. Switzerland 16, Wickham to Grenville, March 17, 1796.

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generous dispositions of the English government, should matters turn out unfortunately for him, and should he be driven into exile. Wickham had no hesitation in complying with this request and, forthwith, proceeded to write directly to Pichegru. His letter, which he signed under the name of Bluet, the designation by which he was known to those in the secret of these negotiations, was couched in somewhat enigmatical language, and was written in a feigned hand. Nevertheless, it was sufficiently explicit in regard to those points about which Pichegru had desired to be reassured. It was in due course delivered to him by Demougé, who reported that the general had expressed great satisfaction at the tenour of the message¹ and considered that a sum of four

¹ F. O. Switzerland 16, Wickham to Grenville, March 17, 1796. *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 259, 260, 311.—Je viens de voir le voyageur. (Fauche.) Je suis on ne peut plus content, du rapport, qu'il m'a donné et de son voyage et de votre santé! Menagez-la, je vous en prie, pour l'amour de tous, et surtout de votre nombreuse et malheureuse famille, dont l'état actuel m'a vivement affecté. Comptez sur moi pour tous les services que je serai en état de leur rendre. Du moins n'auront ils rien à craindre dans les premiers moments. Je pourvoirai à tous leurs besoins, ce qui doit vous tranquilliser vous même dans le cas que votre maison résout à suspendre ses engagements actuels. Quand mon ami ou le bon vieillard (Condé) qui vous à fait écrire par Louis (Fauche) trouvent bon de me demander, je me rendrai dans vos cantons ou j'aurai le plaisir le plus sincère à vous voir et à vous témoigner de vive voix tous les sentiments dont je suis pénétré pour vous et mon admiration des efforts généreux et honorables que vous voulez bien faire pour relever votre famille de l'état étroit et pénible où il a plu la bonne providence de les placer momentanément, sans doute pour les rendre à l'avenir plus digne de sa benediction. Je dois, cependant, vous avertir que, comme le voyage est long, les chemins mauvais, et qu'il me faudra peut être deux jours pour me preparer vous ferez bien d'avertir le bon vieillard à temps, qui me fera arriver tout de suite. On ne me paraît pas sans inquietudes du côté de la maison Rougemont, (Austria?) pour moi je suis autrement tranquille et parfaitement disposé à laisser le tout à votre prudence dont vous avez déjà donné tant de preuves.

Malgrés vos malheurs et ceux de votre famille, qui doivent vous être encore plus sensibles, je ne peux dans ce moment qu'envier votre sort. Dans l'esperance de vous embrasser bientôt, je vous prie de me compter parmi les meilleurs et les plus fidèles de vos amis. BLUET.

P.S.—Je vous prie de me donner au plus tôt un aperçu approximatif,

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or five hundred thousand *louis* would suffice in the first instance for the needs of his army.¹

Craufurd, meanwhile, lost no time in acting upon Wickham's advice. The result of the inquiries which he, accordingly, addressed to General Klinglin tended to confirm the truth of many of Fauche's statements. But the colonel could not bring himself to believe his story that he owed his release from prison at Strasburg to the direct interposition of Pichegru. Nor was Fauche's tale deserving of any credit that, but for Pichegru's assistance, he must have been shut up in Mannheim during the siege. He had investigated that matter on the spot and was satisfied that the man had quitted the town by the left bank of the river, before the investment upon that side was complete,² while it was in the power of every one to leave who chose. He was, consequently, not disposed to place unlimited confidence in M. Fauche and felt little doubt that he was often guilty of exaggeration, but he agreed with Wickham that the fact of his communications with Pichegru must be regarded as established. What then were the real intentions of that individual? Was he playing a double game? Did he keep his government informed of his relations with Condé's and Wickham's agents? That was a course which he might have adopted as a matter of precaution, even if the messages he had sent to Condé were an honest expression of his real sentiments. But against that possibility must be set the circumstance that he had encouraged the dissemination of counter-revolutionary tracts among his troops. That was a proceeding, it must be admitted, which it was inconceivable that the Directory could sanction. Perhaps, however, at the

aussi exact et détaillé que les circonstances le permettront, de tous vos besoins.

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 298.

² *Ibid.*, I. pp. 296 and 305.

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last moment, it was his practice to prevent the distribution of the bills and pamphlets in question. In short his conduct was capable of explanation in many different ways, but, after careful consideration, Craufurd was inclined to think that "he had not yet made up his mind as to the party that he would support, but was endeavouring to gain the confidence of his army sufficiently to be able to dispose of it as he might think fit." It was, therefore, advisable, Craufurd concluded, that all their plans for the next campaign should be based upon sound military calculations. Should it happen, however, that, in the course of the operations, "any favourable circumstance should arise from the defection of the Republican army, every nerve must be strained to profit by it, nor should anything be neglected that could tend to produce events of this nature."¹

While Wickham and Craufurd thus compared notes and exchanged views about "the great affair," Demougé, in his reports from Strasburg, depicted in lurid terms the misery of the Republican troops in their winter quarters and declared that their exasperation with the government was rising daily. Pichegru has been charged with having deliberately aggravated the sufferings of his men, in order to bring them into the state of mind which he considered suitable for the successful prosecution of his secret plans. By the terms of the truce which had been concluded with the Austrians, at the end of December, ten days' notice had to be given before hostilities could begin afresh. But Pichegru, it has been alleged, instead of availing himself of this circumstance to disseminate his troops widely, kept them closely concentrated in a country exhausted by four years of continuous warfare. It is plain that the condition of the Army of the Rhine, in the early months of 1796, was lamentable. But,

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 274-279.

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from the evidence available, it is not possible to say with certainty whether Pichegru was at all responsible for the prevailing state of affairs. The Directory was practically bankrupt and only contrived to carry on the government by means of forced loans and other extraordinary devices. It was quite beyond the powers of the war department to pay and to feed the large number of men maintained under arms. The plight of Jourdan's people, at this period, seems to have been little, if at all, better than that of Pichegru's troops. On the other hand, Gouvion Saint-Cyr, a man of sound judgment, who was at this time serving in the Army of the Rhine, holds that Pichegru, undoubtedly, kept his men unnecessarily crowded together, in order to increase their discomfort and inspire them with hatred of the Directorial *régime*. Nor is it to be denied that one of the first measures of his successor in command of the Army of the Rhine was to distribute the troops over a much wider area of ground, and, thereby, to relieve their distress to an appreciable extent.¹

"An explosion is imminent. The army is in a high state of irritation. Baptiste (Pichegru) has been called to Paris. He refuses to go. His action must bring on a crisis." Such was the stirring news transmitted by Demougé, on February 27. Condé was greatly excited. He begged Craufurd to lose no time in joining him at Bühl and at once to send a large sum of money to Strasburg. He informed Wurmser that "the pear was ripe" and asked for leave to unite with Pichegru, whenever that general should intimate to him that he was ready to receive him. Craufurd, remembering former disappointments, took matters very coolly, and saw no reason for hasty action of the kind advocated by Condé. Nor was he mistaken. Two days later, another message from

¹ H. Bourdon, *Les armées du Rhin*, p. 77; G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 207-210.

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Demougé, placed a very different complexion upon the situation. The spy had had an interview with Pichegru himself who told him that he had asked for a month's leave and intended to visit Paris *incognito*. The Directors wished to discuss military business with him and possibly desired to remove him from his command. But he had no intention of conferring with them. He had sent an officer of his staff to Paris to explain the situation to the government, alleging that urgent private affairs obliged him to go to Arbois, his native village. But, while he would thus be supposed to be at his home in Franche-Comté, he would in reality be living secretly in Paris with his brother, a former priest. In the capital, which was in a very disturbed state, he would take counsel of his political friends and consider what course he should pursue. In answer to Demougé's inquiry as to whether he stood in want of funds, he appears to have replied that he might need some money for the journey.¹

Condé was reduced to the depths of despair. He had firmly believed that the time had come at last when he and Pichegru were to join forces and march upon the capital to restore the ancient monarchy. But now, although Demougé declared that the Republican army was bitterly discontented and very well disposed for an enterprise of that kind, Pichegru talked of abandoning his command and of gaining Paris stealthily in order to discuss the situation with his political friends. Condé was completely bewildered and could only write urgently to the Austrian agent bidding him do all in his power to dissuade the general from so disastrous a proceeding. He had had a conversation of three hours' duration with the "amiable Poinsinette" (Pichegru), replied Demougé, on March 10, in the course of which the general had confided to

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 217-219.

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him all his great plans, but they were of so far-reaching a character that he must forbear describing them in his present report. Two days later, the letter arrived which purported to relate in detail the nature of these vast conceptions. But its contents proved singularly disappointing. Pichegru, it was alleged, talked of extirpating the evil by the roots, but as usual he deprecated partial measures and for the present counselled patience and inaction. He now, however, announced his intention of going openly to Paris, to call the government to account for the state of misery to which his army was reduced. It was a step which would assuredly "open the eyes" not only of his own troops, but of those of all the other armies of the Republic.¹

Wickham and Craufurd were no less puzzled than Condé. Wickham was at a loss to know what to think. He was inclined to believe that "Pichegru had been well disposed from the first, but that the work he had undertaken was beyond his powers." The whole business, however, was so extraordinary that it was necessary to be prepared for every eventuality. In spite of the unexpected turn which the affair had taken, it might be that their hopes were on the eve of being realised. Should Pichegru proclaim the King, he had said that he should require 400,000 or 500,000 *louis* for the subsistence of his army. Wickham, therefore, wrote to inform Craufurd that he had procured for him a credit to that amount. "It was both right and necessary," he considered, "that the money should be taken from the funds of the Condé army. It will be found much more easy and natural at home that the provision should be made in that way." Moreover, as the colonel dispensed the pay of Condé's contingent and was accredited to the headquarters of the Austrian army it was desirable that "he should

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 236.

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appear to have the sole direction of the affair more particularly so of the *coffre fort*." In conclusion, Wickham added that to meet Pichegru's personal needs he had supplied Fauche with 1000 *louis*, which sum he hoped that the colonel would include among his other payments.¹

Craufurd for his part regarded the affair as "extremely mysterious." In his opinion, however, Pichegru's projected journey to Paris could be explained in one way only. If his views were such as they believed them to be, if he were really intent upon preparing the minds of his men for a restoration of the monarchy, it was inconceivable that he should of his own free will quit the army. It was clear that he was leaving Strasburg either because he had been, or was about to be, superseded. Should he return and resume the command of the Army of the Rhine, Craufurd would regard it as "an incontestable proof that he had been playing a double game." He greatly distrusted Demougé's account of the language held by Pichegru on the different occasions when he had met him. He altogether disbelieved his story that the general had ever announced an intention of proceeding *incognito* to Paris. It was inconceivable that a commander-in-chief, more especially one who was as closely watched as Pichegru, could have frequent private interviews with a man like Demougé. That person spoke of a conversation of three hours' duration he had recently had with Pichegru, in which the general had unfolded for his benefit all his vast plans. But, after a perusal of his report, he failed "to understand how they could have conversed so much and he have so little to relate." Plainly the man had been guilty of gross exaggeration. With regard to the pecuniary side of the business he would willingly comply with Wickham's request and arrange for the payment of the 1000 *louis* which had

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 297-299.

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been given to Fauche.¹ But he was strongly of opinion that for the present no more money should be sent to Furet (Demougé). He had, accordingly, given Louis (Fauche) clearly to understand that no further advances would be made, until Baptiste (Pichegru) should be prepared to lay before them a definite plan for the surrender of a fortress and for the union of his army with that of the Prince de Condé.²

Craufurd was, unquestionably, mistaken in supposing that Pichegru had never intended to visit Paris *incognito*. It is impossible to guess what reasons he may have had for wishing that his presence in the capital should not be known to his government, but his correspondence with Colonel Abbattucci proves that at one time he had seriously entertained the notion of paying a clandestine visit to Paris. That officer who, doubtless, knew nothing of his chief's treasonable proceedings, had been entrusted with the task of explaining the events of the past campaign to the Directors.³ It was the contents of his letter which appear to have convinced Pichegru that he must abandon the idea of concealing his proposed journey to Paris from the government. Nor would Craufurd's disbelief in the frequency of Demougé's interviews with Pichegru appear to have been altogether warranted. A cunning plan had been devised to account for their constant meetings. Demougé, by Pichegru's advice, always kept about him letters and plans professing to detail the position of the Austrians, which, should the necessity arise, could always be adduced to prove that he was a spy employed to gain intelligence of the enemy.⁴ Demougé, however, seems to have entered into his new part so zealously and to have made so many inquiries

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 9, Craufurd to Grenville, April 2, 1796.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 306-310.

³ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 226-227.

⁴ F. O. Switzerland 16, Wickham to Grenville, March 17, 1796.

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about the movements of the Austrians that Craufurd's suspicions were seriously aroused. It is evident that it was his curiosity about the dispositions of the Imperial armies which was the chief reason of the extreme distrust with which Colonel Craufurd regarded him.¹

But, although the opinions which Craufurd had formed about these matters of secondary importance may have been erroneous, his conclusions upon the main question were thoroughly sound. Pichegru, having obtained the leave for which he had asked, appears, on March 4, to have handed over the command to Desaix, who was to replace him during his absence. But, for some reason which cannot be determined with certainty, he was clearly in no hurry to avail himself of the permission he had obtained. For more than a fortnight he lingered on at Strasburg and in the neighbourhood. Perhaps he awaited news of Abbaticci, the staff-officer he had despatched to Paris. Without doubt, also, he was reluctant to start without the money which he had intimated to Demougé he should need for the journey. Fauche, to whom the spy transmitted the request, applied in the first instance to Craufurd, who curtly declined to furnish any money whatever. But, as has been related, Wickham proved more accommodating. Craufurd's obduracy, however, had delayed matters and it was not until March 16 that Fauche returned with the 1000 *louis* to Offenbourg, where he and Montgaillard had for some time past been residing with the Baronne de Reich. The whole sum in gold appears to have been carried across the Rhine and into Strasburg by a priest. Demougé, to whom it was delivered, deducted from it, for his own remuneration, perhaps 100 *louis*, or perhaps even more, and handed over the remainder to Pichegru on March 18. Two days later, Pichegru at last set out for Paris. But, a week before, the Directory had resolved to remove

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 277.

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him from his command and to appoint Moreau to replace him at the head of the Army of the Rhine. Clearly, when he set out for Paris, on March 20, he must have been aware that he had been superseded. But, in an interview which he had with Demougé on the morning of his departure, he omitted to mention that matter to him.¹

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 237-239.

CHAPTER VI

GENERAL BONAPARTE

WHEN it was decided to supersede General Pichegru, no real suspicion seems to have been entertained by his government that he was engaged in a treasonable correspondence with the enemy. Without doubt, ever since the close of the campaign of 1795, he had been the subject of unfavourable rumours and even of direct denunciation, but the Directory appears to have attached little importance to them. It is one of the most remarkable features of the case that the secret should have been so well preserved, seeing the large number of persons to whom it was known. In addition to the agents employed by Condé and by Wickham the Austrian staff was fully cognizant of all the details of the affair. Now the Imperial generals had but one object in view in favouring Pichegru's relations with Condé. So long as they considered that they might prove the means of enabling them to acquire useful military information they were ready to encourage them. But it was a very different matter if the understanding, which had been established between Pichegru and the Bourbon Prince, were to lead to a restoration of the monarchy in France. The destruction of the Republic was not a development which the Court of Vienna desired to see accomplished. It may be inferred, therefore, that the Austrian commanders were confidentially instructed to hamper, if not to betray, the correspondence rather than to permit it to bring

about the overthrow of the existing *régime* in France. Indeed, at this very time, Robert Craufurd, who was in London on leave, was drawing Lord Grenville's attention to the peculiar attitude which Marshal Wurmser had recently assumed towards the affair. "He has not even thought it worth while," he pointed out, "to keep it entirely secret, and has lately mentioned it, very imprudently, to persons to whom it was unnecessary and, therefore, improper that it should be communicated."¹

Nevertheless, strange as it may seem, it was not because he was distrusted by his government that Pichegru was superseded. Some of the Directors may have entertained some slight suspicion about him, but the chief reason for their decision was the conviction that it was hopeless to expect that he and Jourdan would ever again work together harmoniously. The disasters of the past campaign had led to mutual recriminations and it was clear that either Pichegru or Jourdan must be removed. It seems to have been resolved to retain Jourdan at his post and to replace Pichegru by Moreau, simply because the commander of the Army of the Sambre and Meuse was the more disposed to make light of difficulties and the more inclined cheerfully to adopt the plans of the government.²

When, in due course, Pichegru's retirement was made public, the news was received with intense indignation at Riegel,³ where Condé had recently been ordered to take up fresh quarters. It was in vain that Demougé and Fauche endeavoured to reassure His Highness. His removal, wrote the Austrian spy, will have a tremendous effect upon the army. Already the men are grumbling loudly. Pichegru, Fauche declared,

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 9, R. Craufurd to Grenville, March 2, 1796.

² G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 229-234.

³ Riegel, a small town about fifteen miles from Friburg in the Grand Duchy of Baden.

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was too high-minded and generous to play them false. He had accepted Wickham's money on the eve of his departure for Paris. Clearly, therefore, he must have some plan of action in his mind. If it were otherwise he must, indeed, be the vilest of men. Far from being regarded as a disaster, his retirement should be looked upon as a fortunate development. Without doubt, it was a well-considered move in the astute game he was playing. But Condé, contrary to his wont, could not be comforted, and would not be reassured so easily.¹

Wickham had lately been engaged upon an affair more in keeping with the diplomatic character of his mission than the kind of business which generally occupied his attention. It was not only in France that the war had inflicted great misery upon the people. In England the sufferings of the labouring classes had been intensified by a wet summer and a bad harvest. At the opening of the parliament, in the autumn of 1795, the King had been insulted by the mob which cried out for peace, for the dismissal of Pitt and assailed the Royal coach with stones. George III. and his principal ministers were not men to yield to popular clamour. Existing laws, they maintained, were clearly inadequate for the repression of the revolutionary spirit which was abroad. Drastic measures must be enacted for the prevention of seditious meetings and the punishment of treasonable practices. Nevertheless, when the Directory was established, Mr. Pitt came to the conclusion that terms of peace should now be proposed to France. Several ministers, however, were averse to opening negotiations with the revolutionists and the King was opposed to any measure which could be construed as a surrender to the mob. But in the end Pitt's arguments prevailed and his cabinet agreed unanimously to adopt his suggestion. In his opinion it was very desirable to give the Directors an opportunity

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 248-249.

of discussing the conditions of a settlement, improbable as it was that they would consent to cede any of the conquests of the Republic to obtain peace. The Directorial *régime* was, in theory at least, an improvement upon the rule of the Committee of Public Safety and the Convention, and England had constantly declared that she would be ready to treat with any reasonably stable government which might be set up in France. Should the Directors refuse to make any concessions, the grasping and unyielding character of their policy would be made manifest to the world. Thus, while in England a refusal on the part of the Directory to listen to proposals for a settlement would assuredly impart additional energy and animation to the public mind, in France it would, doubtless, "lead to much discontent and demur."¹

Wickham, notwithstanding that his relations with the Royalists had made him especially obnoxious to the Directory, was charged to transmit the British proposals to the French minister at Basle. The note, which, on March 8, 1796, he caused to be delivered to M. Barthelémy, asked for information upon three points. Would France consent to send plenipotentiaries to a congress to discuss the conditions of a general settlement? Would she consent to make known the basis upon which she would be prepared to negotiate? Had she any alternative proposal to make for arriving at a general pacification? Barthelémy himself would gladly have discussed the conditions of a European settlement. He was no believer in the revolutionary doctrine that the frontiers of the Republic must be extended to their "natural limits." But the instructions, which in due course he received from Paris, put an end to all hopes of peace. The communication which he was charged to make to Mr. Wickham expressed the disbelief of the Directory in the pacific intentions of

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, III. pp. 169-170.

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the British government, and declared that it would be a violation of the new constitution to discuss the alienation of territories which had been formally incorporated into the Republic.¹

Wickham was disposed to ascribe this peremptory rejection of the British overtures to the hopes which the Directory entertained of concluding a separate peace with Austria. For some time past he had suspected that a very secret negotiation was being carried on between Paris and Vienna. Pelin, the Austrian Chancellor's confidential secretary, had formerly been associated with Mirabeau and was now, Wickham believed, the channel of communication between Baron Thugut and certain "leading members" of the French government. In consequence of his suspicions, he had, as has been already related,² taken steps to intercept Pelin's letters, copies of some of which he had transmitted to Lord Grenville. By these means he had acquired the conviction that what he described as "a sort of tampering" had been in progress throughout the winter.³ Furthermore, he learnt that direct proposals for a settlement had been carried to Vienna by an individual of bad repute, the heretofore Marquis de Poterat.

Thugut, the Austrian Chancellor, was a man of humble origin, who owed his great position to his abilities and industry. But he had been concerned in a transaction which, were it to be brought to light, might entail his ruin and disgrace. About the year 1756, at the time of the conclusion of the Franco-Austrian alliance, he had been initiated into the secret policy of Louis XV. and, under a feigned name, had

¹ *Annual Register*, 1796, pp. 125-126.

² V. p. 88.

³ F. O. Switzerland 14 and 17, Wickham to Grenville, January 6, 1796; April 7, 1796. *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 330-331. *Fortescue Papers*, III. pp. 181-182.

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corresponded with M. de Choiseuil, and, subsequently, with other French ministers. The stipend which he received for these real, or supposed, services, was continued down to the death of Louis XV. and, in the reign of Louis XVI., was, apparently, commuted for a sum down. Traces of his relations with the old Court were discovered at the French Foreign Office, and the Directors resolved to force him to listen to their overtures by a threat of exposure. The conduct of the negotiation was entrusted to the aforementioned Marquis de Poterat who, having under the old *régime* been employed in the secret channels of diplomacy, now undertook to execute this very questionable business for the new rulers of France.

Thugut either guessed or received warning of the kind of pressure which was to be applied to him and is believed to have disclosed the whole affair to the Emperor. In an age when the standard of morality in such matters was very low, his explanation appears to have been considered satisfactory that, although he had been a pensioner of the Court of France, he had never betrayed an Austrian interest nor divulged a secret of any value. Having thus made his confession and having obtained the forgiveness of his Imperial master, he could listen with composure to Poterat's proposals and reject them without fear of the consequences.¹ The blackmailing envoy of the Directory, after this unexpected discomfiture, returned to await further instructions at Basle, where one of Wickham's spies contrived to establish intimate relations with him.² Wickham, in consequence, soon learnt that the acquisition of Bavaria and aggrandisement at the expense of the Venetian Republic had been the bait held out to Austria to induce her to secede from the British alliance. Before long, moreover, he

¹ *Revue Historique*, XVII. p. 25.

² F. O. Switzerland 18, Wickham to Grenville, July 13 and 14, 1796.

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heard the complete story of the exposure with which Thugut had been threatened by the Directory. But, as early as April 8, while he was yet in ignorance of the exact nature of Poterat's mission, he was in a position to assure his chief in London that, whatever proposals had been made to it, the Court of Vienna had declined to entertain them.¹

The contemptuous rejection of the British offer to discuss the terms of a general settlement could not fail, Wickham considered, to create a bad impression in France, where people were heartily tired of the war. It would be different had the attempt to conclude a separate peace with Austria proved successful. But, as matters stood, he had strong reasons for hoping that the publication of the correspondence which had passed between Barthélemy and himself would increase the unpopularity of the Directory.² The supersession of Pichegru, he had no doubt, would tend to the same result. That general's journey to Paris was, he believed, connected with a widespread movement against the government. He was, therefore, less disposed than Condé to regret his departure from Strasburg.³ Everything, however, would depend upon the events of the next few weeks. For the present he would await news and be prepared to send, at short notice, a large sum of ready money to Pichegru in Paris.⁴

Very little is unfortunately known about Pichegru's proceedings in the capital. It would seem that, in spite of his several requests to be relieved of his command, he had not expected to be taken at his word. But, the Directory having decided to supersede him, he appears to have considered it advisable to say

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 338.

² *Ibid.*, I. p. 351.

³ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 355-356.

⁴ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 320 and 335.

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nothing about the fact that he had more than once tendered his resignation. Thus it would be supposed that his services had been dispensed with, because he was constantly complaining about the miserable state of his troops. But here again he met with a disagreeable surprise. Neither the army nor the public was greatly affected by the news that he no longer commanded.¹ Unquestionably he was still very popular with the soldiers. Neither officers nor men as yet suspected that he had deliberately led them to defeat upon the battlefield, and that he had purposely done nothing to mitigate the discomfort of their winter quarters. But Desaix, who temporarily succeeded him, was, also, a highly popular officer, and, from the moment that he assumed command, the condition of the army appears to have undergone a change for the better. This circumstance was probably the main cause of the indifference with which the troops heard of the supersession of the general, to whom they were supposed to be so devotedly attached. But it is safe to presume that the disasters of the campaign of 1795 had detracted from his reputation, notwithstanding that he had contrived that it should be widely believed that the Directory and Jourdan were chiefly responsible for them. Without doubt, in the eyes of the army and of the citizens of Paris, Pichegru was still the Conqueror of Holland, but he was, also, the general from whom the Austrians had recaptured the Palatinate.

During his stay in Paris, Pichegru was treated with the utmost consideration and courtesy by the Directory. It was, however, an open secret that he was displeased and discontented and all the many enemies of the government appear to have made advances to him. Whether they were "pure" Royalists or whether they

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 342. G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 241,

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belonged to the faction of Orléans or to the moderate party, all those who wished to see the Directory overthrown seem to have confided their hopes to him. But he had not been long in the capital before the papers announced that he was to be sent as ambassador to the Court of Sweden. The news was true. Pichegru, however, had given only a qualified assent when this new offer of employment had been made to him. He required some months' rest, he wrote in reply, and must return to Alsace, before he could leave France. His conditions were accepted and he prepared to set out for Strasburg.

The situation of the Directory, in the early part of the year 1796, was unquestionably precarious. Its financial position was no better, and its unpopularity was greater, than that of the Committee of Public Safety, while it lacked the *prestige* which that body had acquired. The closing months of the previous year had been marked by military reverses upon the Rhine, and the prospects of the next campaign appeared gloomy. Russia was arming and Catherine seemed at last to have resolved to render active assistance to England and to Austria. Nevertheless, the Directors adhered firmly to their principle of "natural frontiers" and were determined never to surrender any conquests of the Republic, for the sake of peace. As has been shown, they scornfully rejected the British offer and, although they sought to conclude in secret a separate agreement with Austria, it was based upon the Emperor's abandonment of all his former possessions in the Netherlands. In spite of their distress, war was, in truth, a condition almost essential to their continued existence. Military *prestige* and money they must have and it was by war alone that they could be obtained.

Victories might be won in the Rhineland, but little plunder could be gathered in a ravaged and exhausted

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country. In order to replenish its exchequer, the Directory must lay under contribution the rich towns and fertile provinces of northern Italy. General Bonaparte, accordingly, during the winter, drew up a scheme for the invasion of Piedmont, which was submitted to the commander of the Army of the Alps. General Scherer, although he had recently inflicted a severe defeat upon the Austrians at Loano, was merely a rough soldier of very moderate abilities. He pronounced the plan impracticable and sarcastically suggested that the man who had devised it was the proper person to attempt its execution. The Directory, thinking the idea sound, determined to recall him and to allow Bonaparte to take his place. The young general was appointed to his command on March 3, 1796, and, six days later, married Josephine de Beauharnais, the widow of an ex-noble, who, under the Terror, had expiated his military blunders upon the scaffold. Their honeymoon was of brief duration. On March 12, the new commander of the army, henceforth to be known as that of Italy, quitted Paris and set out for the frontier to take up his new duties.

Bonaparte was hitherto known only as the officer who had successfully dispersed the *sections* in the streets of Paris, on the afternoon of the 13 *vendémiaire*. Hardly a sufficient reason, many thought, why he should be preferred to men of tried experience. Before the days of his intimacy with Madame Tallien, Barras' relations with the widow Beauharnais had been notorious. The young general's marriage to the Director's cast-off mistress laid his appointment open to a scandalous interpretation. Without doubt, some of his officers derived much secret amusement from the boyish enthusiasm with which their general described his newly-wedded wife and from the pride with which he displayed to them her portrait. But, when he

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explained his plans and gave out his orders, men like Massena and Augereau could realize at once that they had met their master in the art of war. A few days after his arrival at his headquarters at Nice, the initial movements of the campaign began. By April 14, the Austrians were in retreat upon Milan, while the Sardinians had been hurled back upon Turin. In less than a week Bonaparte's strategy had triumphed. Advancing by interior lines, he succeeded in forcing asunder the two armies which sought to bar his progress and in completely separating the Austrians from their Sardinian allies.

The news of the battle of Monténotte, the first of Bonaparte's long series of victories, reached Paris, while Pichegru was still in the capital. At a time when the government was in a most embarrassed situation, it disconcerted all his plans that the intelligence from Italy should be so highly favourable. The brilliant manner in which a comparatively unknown general of their selection had opened the campaign could not fail to raise the Directors in the public estimation. Perhaps it was the news from Italy which caused him to stay in Paris rather longer than he appears originally to have intended. On April 1, he had written to Badonville bidding him tell *Mademoiselle*, Demougé presumably, that he would shortly be back at Strasburg.¹ The press, moreover, had constantly announced that, before proceeding to Stockholm, he would return to Alsace with Moreau. It was not, however, until April 30, two days after the arrival of Moreau, that Pichegru reached Strasburg. On the following morning, he saw Demougé and gave him an account of his proceedings in Paris. Again, a few days later, they appear to have met and to have discussed the situation at length. The reports of these two interviews which the spy made haste to transmit to

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 250.

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his employers are dated May 2 and May 10 respectively.¹

The position of affairs in Paris was not so favourable as Pichegru had supposed. "The scoundrels," he told Demougé, "were blown out with pride," on account of the capture of Charette, the Royalist leader in the west, and of Bonaparte's victories in Italy. Nevertheless, all those who were not avowed Jacobins desired to see some form of monarchical government established. There was no unanimity of opinion, however, as to who the new ruler of France should be. The enthronement of the Duc d'Orléans was a solution which counted numerous adherents. The son of *Egalité*, the regicide, could not be opposed to an amnesty for political crimes and would, doubtless, accept contentedly the position of a sovereign in a limited monarchy. While in Paris, continued Pichegru, he had realized that it was useless to think of restoring the old *régime* in its pristine form. Louis XVIII. would do well, therefore, to proclaim his intention of submitting to the imposition of statutory checks upon the kingly power. His remedy would come later. When he was firmly established upon his throne, promises of forgiveness could be forgotten and constitutional guarantees could be set aside.

The army, however, was the controlling factor of the situation. Hence it was necessary that the Austrians should denounce the armistice and begin hostilities, the moment the prescribed delay of ten days should have gone by. By that time neither of the armies of the Republic would be ready to take the field. The Austrians must, therefore, press them vigorously, and relentlessly follow up every advantage. In those circumstances he had little doubt that the troops would insist upon his recall as the one man capable

¹ *Procès de Pichegru Moreau, Georges, etc.* Pièce 186e et pièce 197e.

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of staying the progress of the enemy. Once he were again at the head of his army, he would ask for an armistice, which the Austrians should grant, declaring that they would treat with no one but General Pichegru. Thus he would become the arbiter of the destinies of his country, and Louis XVIII. could rest assured that his interests would be in good hands. In answer to a question put to him by Demougé, Pichegru declared that it would be inadvisable for the present to make advances to either Jourdan or Moreau. "But should *la Mariée* (Moreau) be well thrashed by the Y. (Austrians) she would agree to anything."

Meanwhile an event had occurred which caused Wickham and Craufurd the keenest anxiety. It has been mentioned that Pichegru, for some unknown reason, appears to have stayed in Paris rather longer than had been expected. Demougé, in consequence of information derived from Badonville, had confidently assured his employers, on April 16, that the general might be expected to arrive at Strasburg at any moment. Moreover, the *Annales de la République*, in its issue of the 4 *floreale*,¹ had announced that Pichegru intended to proceed with Moreau to Strasburg at his own expense, in order that his friend and successor should have the benefit of his local knowledge. It was an example of patriotism and friendship which the paper declared was sublime. Craufurd was, in consequence, not surprised to learn that, during the night of April 20-21, General La Tour, commanding the left wing of the Austrians upon the Upper Rhine, had received a secret communication to the effect that Pichegru purposed to cross the water and was anxious to ascertain how the Austrians would receive him. La Tour replied very cautiously that he had no reason to expect the arrival of General

¹ A copy of this paper was sent by Craufurd to Grenville enclosed in his despatch of April 30, 1796.

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Pichegru, but that he or any other officer would be well treated. In due course word was brought back that Pichegru would cross the river on the night of 25-26. At the appointed time, General Klinglin, accompanied by M. Fauche, went to the spot where the spies and emissaries of the Austrian staff were in the habit of passing to and fro across the Rhine. But it was in vain that they waited all through the night. Pichegru neither crossed the river in person nor sent them any message. To add to their perplexity, Demougé, three days later, reported the arrival of Moreau, but stated that Pichegru had not yet appeared upon the scene. Those in the secret began to fear that some misfortune must have overtaken him. Demougé's letter of May 2, containing the announcement of the general's arrival and relating what had passed between them, only to some extent relieved their anxiety.

Neither the authors of this mystification nor the reasons for which it was practised seem ever to have been discovered. Fauche makes no mention of the incident in his *Mémoires*. Yet it can scarcely have escaped his recollection that, in company with General Klinglin, he spent a whole night waiting for Pichegru upon the banks of the Rhine. It would have been far more in accordance with his usual custom had he related with pride, and, in this instance, with perfect truth, that he had been selected to accompany an Austrian officer of rank upon an important, but, as it proved, abortive mission. For some reason or another, however, he passes over the affair in silence. Craufurd's explanation is not improbably correct that the Republican authorities had already obtained some inkling of Pichegru's illicit relations with the Austrians. They, therefore, he surmises, determined to send a message, purporting to have come from him, to General La Tour, with the idea that in answering it, the Austrian officer might

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make some allusion to previous communications and thus confirm their suspicions.

On April 27, while it was still believed that Pichegru might at any moment appear within the Austrian lines, Wickham arrived at Friburg to confer with Craufurd. Hostilities, they hoped, would shortly begin. Already the Archduke Charles, the Emperor's brother, who was to command the army which had hitherto been under the orders of Marshal Clerfayt, had arrived at Mainz. But a serious difficulty had arisen. Owing to the stringency of the money market in London, it had been found necessary to postpone the raising of the Austrian loan, the interest of which the British government had undertaken to guarantee. It was greatly to be feared that this circumstance combined with the bad news from Italy would have the effect of paralyzing the operations upon the Rhine. There were other questions, moreover, which Wickham was desirous of discussing with the colonel. Without doubt, he was anxious to talk over with him the later developments of the Pichegru affair. The decision of the Court of Vienna, which this year was frankly avowed, that Condé's army should not be employed at the front, was another matter requiring their close consideration. The British government had undertaken to bear a large share of the expense of maintaining that force, in order that, in the event of a successful campaign, an important body of French Royalists might be present with the Austrians. But it was clear that the Imperial Cabinet held very different views from that of London with respect to the re-establishment of monarchical institutions in France. If, therefore, it were the settled policy of the Court of Vienna to deprive, as far as possible, the Royalists of a voice in the arrangements which must follow a victorious campaign in France, there was no longer any reason why the British government should

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incur further expense in connection with Condé's army.¹

Craufurd, it may be supposed, at once informed Wickham of the mysterious message sent to General La Tour and of the fruitless errand undertaken by Klinglin and Fauche. Without doubt, that matter was discussed in all its bearings. But a surprise from a different quarter was in store for them. On the following morning, a note was received from the Prince de Condé, announcing that Louis XVIII. would arrive at Riegel during the day, and begging them immediately to join him, in order that he might have the benefit of their advice "as to the manner in which he ought to act on so delicate an occasion."² Louis' sudden departure from Italy was the result of Bonaparte's invasion of Piedmont. The Committee of Public Safety and the Directory had both complained of the presence of the exiled King at Verona. But the aristocratic republicans of Venice had paid little attention to their remonstrances and had, doubtless, derived satisfaction from the annoyance which their hospitality to the exiled monarch caused the Jacobins in Paris. Their attitude, however, changed completely when they learnt that Bonaparte was advancing upon Turin, driving before him the Sardinians, whom he had cut off from their Austrian allies. No sooner was the result of his operations at Dego and Monténotte known at Venice, than Louis XVIII. was peremptorily ordered instantly to quit Verona.

The delicacy of the situation, which had caused the Prince de Condé to invoke the counsels of Craufurd and of Wickham, consisted in the fact that the Court of Vienna had more than once declined to allow Louis XVIII. to join his army. The two Englishmen

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 322-324, and 341.

² *Ibid.*, I. p. 346.

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complied with His Highness's request, and' at once drove over to Riegel which was only some fifteen miles away. Condé, it would seem, had some thoughts of concealing the expected arrival of the King from the Austrians, lest they should take steps to intercept him upon the road. Wickham and Craufurd, however, persuaded him to abandon this idea, pointing out that, long before the news could reach them, the King would assuredly have arrived at Riegel. Craufurd, moreover, declared emphatically that, as the British commissioner with the Imperial headquarters staff, he could not withhold from the Austrian generals so interesting a piece of news. But he promised readily to do all in his power to induce the Archduke and Marshal Wurmser to sanction Louis' stay at Riegel. Wickham, also, undertook to write to his government recommending that Sir Morton Eden should be instructed to make strong representations to the same effect at Vienna. He could not, however, take any direct action in the matter. He had no official position in Germany and the Austrians would not unnaturally resent his interference. Indeed, had it not been for his anxiety about Pichegru and the possibility that that officer might arrive at any moment, he would have returned at once to Berne and thus have escaped from a most difficult situation. But that affair was, he considered, infinitely too important to be sacrificed "to a point of mere delicacy only." Before the close of the discussion, Louis XVIII. himself, accompanied by the Comte d'Avaray, arrived at Riegel. Wickham and Craufurd were at once presented to him and "were received in the most distinguished and flattering manner."¹

Craufurd and Wickham remained together at Friburg until May 8, during which time they on several occasions visited Riegel and were invited

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 346-349.

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by the King to assist at his councils. Demougé's report of Pichegru's arrival at Strasburg and of the language which he had held to him, at their meeting on May 1, was the first subject for consideration. "It was easy to perceive," wrote Wickham, "that the opinion of Baptiste (Pichegru) as to the necessity of the King's passing through the hands of some, at least, of the persons now in power and place gave them more pain even than the certainty of his being unable to assist them with his army, and they were still more sensibly affected at the idea that this opinion of his should be known at the Courts of Vienna and London." Both he and Craufurd were disposed, after reading the message which Demougé had transmitted, to think that Pichegru could no longer render any effectual service to their cause. The loss of his command, Craufurd considered, had deprived him of the power of controlling the march of events and he would now, without doubt, "sink into that insignificance which is likely to be the consequence either of false calculations or untimely discovery."¹ Wickham, therefore, when he was asked for his opinion at the Royal council table contented himself with suggesting that Pichegru should be assured that the King's views were moderate and conciliatory and that "he would always be ready to make such personal sacrifices as should be found consistent with the real good of his people." To his surprise this advice, which he had expected would elicit strong expressions of dissent, was listened to with comparative approval. Nor was he long in discovering the reason of the readiness with which the Royal counsellors seemed prepared to admit the necessity of the proposed concession. All of them, he soon realized, had perceived at once that almost any interpretation might be placed upon the words "real

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 10, Craufurd to Grenville, May 11, 1796.

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good of his people." No true Royalist had cause for alarm if, as the price of his enthronement, the King need only carry out those reforms which, he might hereafter consider in his wisdom, were "for the real good of his people."¹

A letter, which was, however, never shown to Wickham, was, accordingly, drafted by the King, copied by the Prince de Condé and sent to Pichegru by the usual channel. It was to the effect that even those who had been most deeply concerned in recent events might hope for His Majesty's forgiveness, provided they would bring about the submission of a province or render some equally signal service to the Royal cause. To this pronouncement, which was hardly calculated greatly to reassure the many persons who had reason to fear a restoration of the old monarchy, Louis added the extraordinary proposal that Pichegru should employ "his influence over the army and the Directory" to obtain the cession of Strasburg to the Royalists.²

This letter must have afforded the man to whom it was addressed food for bitter reflection. It must have convinced him that the Bourbon princes and their followers were still as incapable of seeing facts in their true light as they had been in the days of the first emigration to Coblenz. He must have realized that neither his account of the situation in general nor of his own position in particular had made the smallest impression upon them.

The amount of the financial assistance to be given during the current year to insurrectionary movements in the interior of France was another matter discussed round the council table at Riegel. Wickham, warned by his former experiences, was now of opinion that it was useless to encourage isolated outbreaks against the

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 362-363.

² G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 260-261.

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government. For the present, he was not disposed to do more than was required for keeping alive a spirit of disaffection. But, should the Austrians assume the offensive vigorously or should a considerable portion of the army under a prominent officer abandon the Republican cause, he would be prepared to expend money lavishly in aid of a general rising. Précý and Imbert-Colomés, the Royalist leaders at Lyons, both of whom participated in the deliberations at Riegel, fully endorsed his views.¹ The moment the Austrians should have achieved such a success, as would necessitate the withdrawal of a portion of the Republican troops now stationed in the southern provinces, Précý undertook to return to France and place himself at the head of his followers. "His measures," he declared, "were so taken and the mountains round Lyons were so well organized that he could enter the country at a day's warning." Arms and ammunition, however, would be needed in large quantities. For that purpose Wickham agreed to supply immediately £12,000, an arrangement with which Précý and Imbert-Colomés both expressed their satisfaction, while with regard to the far larger sum, which would be required after the insurrection, they were content to trust to his assurance that, when the time for action should come, "nothing would be refused them which might conduce to the success of their enterprise."²

Very recently Wickham had had an unpleasant experience in connection with a Royalist insurrection in the department of the Cher. On hearing of the outbreak, he had immediately transmitted 3,000 *louis* to Orléans with the promise that another instalment would be sent very shortly. The collapse of the movement, however, rendered unnecessary the despatch of any further assistance. But, at the same time as he

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 328.

² *Ibid.*, I. p. 367.

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learnt that the insurrection had been suppressed, he discovered that only 900 *louis* had reached Orléans, the greater part of the original sum having been lost in a private speculation by the individual charged with its delivery. "It would hardly be possible for anyone," he declared, "who had not had the opportunity of observing matters on the spot to believe to what extent recent political events had debased the general standard of morals. The mass of profligacy," he wrote, "and total want of principle which the revolution and particularly the system of paper money has introduced into France cannot be calculated by those who have not seen it as nearly as I have."¹

During the King's stay at Condé's headquarters, Fauche, to his intense delight, was presented to His Majesty and received his thanks for the services he had rendered in connection with the Pichegru affair.² Montgaillard, also, visited Riegel and seems to have contrived to establish a certain influence over Louis. On a former occasion, as he made haste to remind him, he had had the honour of addressing him. The King, at that time the Comte de Provence, had once visited the military college of Corrèze and had praised the manner in which an ode of Horace had been construed by one of the students at the establishment. Montgaillard then proceeded to recite the ode which begins: "*Eheu, fugaces Posthume, Posthume,*" declaring that it was his rendering of it which had elicited the approval of so competent a judge as His Majesty.³ Louis, in truth, had a fair knowledge of Latin and was very anxious to be regarded as a finished scholar. Montgaillard, without doubt, was aware of this circumstance and knew well how to

¹ F. O. Switzerland 17, Wickham to Grenville, April 30, 1796; May 5, 1796.

² Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 22-23.

³ La Croix, *Souvenirs de Montgaillard*, p. 41.

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turn it to the best advantage. Probably, it was his adroit flattery of this particular weakness of Louis', combined with the influence which, in spite of all Wickham had said, he still exercised over Condé, which accounts for the confidence reposed in him at Riegel. So real was the ascendancy which, in a short space of time, he contrived to establish over the Royal counsels that he was charged to proceed to Mainz to endeavour to persuade the Archduke to countenance the presence of Louis with Condé's army. As may be supposed, the fact that he had been employed upon so delicate a mission was studiously withheld from Wickham. It was not until some months later, when Condé had no longer any illusions about Montgaillard, that he disclosed to Mr. Wickham the complete story of his relations with him.¹

Meanwhile, the news from Italy was daily assuming a more disquieting character. On April 28, Bonaparte concluded an armistice with the Sardinians which, on May 15, was converted into a regular treaty. Stipulation had been made for the cession and immediate occupation of the fortresses of Coni, Ceva, Tortona and Alessandria. Thus Bonaparte obtained a direct line of communication with Nice, which could not be interfered with by the British fleet. During the progress of the negotiations, however, the operations against the Austrians were carried on with undiminished vigour. In the interval between the armistice at Cherasco and the Sardinian peace, they were outmanœuvred and driven across the Adda, while Bonaparte entered and occupied Milan. On May 22, 1796, the safety of his rearward communications being assured, he was in a position to begin the operations which were to culminate in the reduction of Mantua and the invasion of the Tyrol. Meanwhile, the work which the Directory regarded as the main object of the

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, March 8, 1797.

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campaign proceeded steadily. Piedmont, Lombardy, and the Duchies of Tuscany, Modena, and Parma were in turn called upon to furnish heavy ransoms. Nor was it money alone that Bonaparte extracted from the states which he overran. In addition to gold to replenish the empty exchequer of the Directory, he sent back plunder of another kind to enrich the museums and galleries of the capital. Every contribution of money which reached Paris from his army was supplemented by a consignment of priceless treasures of Italian art.

CHAPTER VII

THE ARCHDUKE CHARLES

IN London it was considered that an immediate rupture of the armistice upon the Rhine would constitute the most effectual reply to Bonaparte's invasion of Italy. Craufurd was, accordingly, instructed to press the adoption of this plan upon the Austrian generals. It was realized, however, that lack of money would probably prove the most serious obstacle to a prompt opening of the campaign. He was, consequently, directed to place £100,000 at the disposal of the Archduke, as some compensation for the failure of the loan it had been intended to raise in London.¹ The Archduke expressed his gratitude for this much-needed advance. Nevertheless, Craufurd feared that the news from Italy might induce the Austrians to conclude a separate peace. In that event he felt sure that "the person² who will direct the operations upon the Rhine will rejoice, because he considers the present alliance as profitable to England only." The attitude and armaments of Prussia were another source of alarm to the Court of Vienna. The outlook, in short, appeared very gloomy, there being grave reason to apprehend "that these disasters in Italy might be the cause of our standing alone in this great contest."³

On May 15, a message was received at Riegel the original of which appears to have been written by

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 9, Grenville to Craufurd, April 29, 1796.

² The Archduke Charles.

³ F. O. Army in Germany 10, Craufurd to Grenville, May 17, 1796.

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Pichegru himself in notes of music. The advice which he had given so often was again repeated. Isolated attempts would only injure their cause in public opinion. The Austrians must achieve a great military success. In that case he would know how to act and the "descendant of Henry IV. could depend upon his devotion." This communication, which seems to have been deciphered at Offenburg by Courant, was enclosed in a letter from Demougé, who announced that Pichegru was about to start for Arbois, his native town, and that he needed money. Condé, having sent back word that it was not in his power to furnish any pecuniary assistance, transmitted the whole correspondence to Wickham, with the remark that it was for him to decide whether this demand should be complied with, or not. In the meanwhile, however, Demougé appears to have contrived to borrow a sum of 300 *louis* and to have given it to Pichegru who, in the expectation that his request would not be refused, had delayed his departure until May 18. On that date, when taking leave of Demougé, Pichegru testified his surprise and annoyance that the Austrians should have neglected his advice to begin hostilities. He had arranged that, the moment they should denounce the armistice, Badonville should convey the news to him and should then hasten to Paris, in order to impart his instructions to "his friends."¹ Fauche, but not without considerable difficulty, seems to have persuaded Mr. Wickham to advance the sum necessary to allow Demougé to discharge his liability. "I have given some money to Louis" (Fauche), Wickham informed Condé on May 30; "are you not astonished at his persistence and my lack of firmness? I dare not say that it is for the last time, lest Your Highness should conclude that I mean as usual to give again."²

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 265-266.

² E. Daudet, *Conjuration de Pichegru*, p. 366.

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Montgaillard, it has already been stated, had been despatched from Riegel on a mission to the Archduke. It is clear, that in addition to soliciting the support of His Imperial Highness to the appeal which Louis was making to be allowed to remain with Condé's army, he was either instructed to, or took upon himself to, discuss the Pichegru affair. "To my certain knowledge," wrote Wickham, some months later, when he discovered the circumstances of Montgaillard's embassy to Mainz, "he put words and opinions into the mouth of Baptiste [Pichegru] which he not only never pronounced, but were directly contrary to his real sentiments."¹

Unfortunately, he omits to mention the nature of the views which he alleges were falsely ascribed to Pichegru. It may be regarded, however, as certain that Montgaillard, at this time, still considered it to be to his interest to do all in his power to bring the Pichegru affair to a successful issue. It may, consequently, be assumed that, if he made any false statements to the Archduke, he did so, not with the object of prejudicing him against the correspondence, but, on the contrary, for the purpose of stimulating his interest in it. It is evident, however, that his efforts were only attended with a moderate degree of success. A letter from Bellegarde, the chief of the staff, to General Klinglin, written, apparently, after one of Montgaillard's interviews with the Archduke, on May 16, shows the light in which the Austrians regarded the matter. The correspondence, Bellegarde pointed out, had not as yet furnished them with any useful information. With respect to it they stood in the position of "the unlucky gambler who cannot resist the temptation of running after his money." Nevertheless, the affair might be allowed to proceed, especially, he added, alluding, as it would seem, to Wickham's lavish disbursements, "if in

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, March 8, 1797.

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the future the expenses connected with it are not to fall upon us.”¹

Fauche, also, obtained an audience of the Archduke and made known to him the opinion of General Pichegru about the necessity of an immediate denunciation of the armistice. His interview with His Imperial Highness took place on the morning of May 21, and, in the afternoon, the Austrian staff gave notice to the French generals that the truce was at an end and that hostilities would begin at the expiration of the stipulated period of ten days. In these circumstances, Fauche, not unnaturally, attributed the action of the Austrians to the skilful and persuasive manner in which he had presented the case for a rupture of the armistice. In point of fact, however, his pleading had in no way influenced their decision. As early as May 6, it had been resolved at Vienna that active hostilities should begin on June 1.²

But, when the time came for opening the campaign, the views of the Court of Vienna were modified. The news of further reverses sustained by Beaulieu in Lombardy caused the plan of operations to be altered. It was decided to detach 30,000 men from the armies of the Rhine and to send them to Italy, under the command of Marshal Wurmser. At the same time, the Archduke was instructed to discontinue his preparations for an advance and to stand upon the defensive. Nothing that Eden, at Vienna, or Craufurd, at the headquarters of the army, could urge in favour of more vigorous measures could induce those who were responsible for the military policy of the Empire to reconsider their decision. A further sum of £150,000, which Craufurd was charged to offer to the Archduke, was accepted with thanks. Nevertheless, its reception in no way

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 267.

² Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 28-29 and 34. G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 268-270.

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altered the determination of the Court of Vienna to maintain a strictly defensive attitude in the Rhine valley. But, while the Archduke was thus tied to the line of the river, Moreau and Jourdan crossed the Rhine at two widely distant points and penetrated into Germany. Before this resolute advance the Austrians fell back slowly to the Danube.¹

In Wickham's opinion, the decision of the Court of Vienna to reinforce its army in Italy by withdrawing troops from the valley of the Rhine could not fail to be "productive of infinite mischief." Should his forebodings be realized, his own position at Berne would become very critical. The triumph of the French arms had increased the strength and influence of the democratic party in Switzerland. "I have little doubt," he warned Lord Grenville on June 15, "that a demand respecting my residence here will soon be made." It was, therefore, he submitted, a point for very serious consideration whether he should not, under pretext of leave of absence, quit Swiss territory and take up his abode at either Frankfort or Mannheim.² But, on the same day as he transmitted his misgivings to London, he was able to send home a very interesting account of a visit which one of his agents had paid to Pichegru in the country.

Among the many individuals in the secret employment of Mr. Wickham were several officers serving with the troops, which the Swiss authorities were obliged to maintain under arms, in order to protect their frontiers from violation by the belligerents. It is probable that it was not for pecuniary reasons only that these men were so ready to assist the British minister to stir up disaffection in the interior of France. If they had not themselves served in the Swiss guards

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 10, Grenville to Craufurd, May 20, 1796; Craufurd to Grenville, June 1, 2, 6, 24, 1796.

² *Fortescue Papers*, III. pp. 212-213.

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of the old French monarchy many of them, without doubt, had friends or relations who had agreeable recollections of the time they had spent in those regiments. In these circumstances, they were necessarily antagonistic to the Republic and very disposed to second the efforts of those who desired to overthrow it. From the nature of the duty upon which they were employed, they were often able to furnish Wickham with useful information, and it was due to their connivance that he had frequently contrived to send into France large consignments of arms and ammunition for the use of the Royalists.¹

Major Rusillion, one of three officers whom Wickham describes as "entirely devoted" to him, having been commissioned by his government to enter France, in order to purchase salt for the troops, readily undertook to seize this opportunity of visiting Pichegru in his retirement. Notwithstanding the confidence which he placed in Fauche, Wickham had been anxious, for some time past, to establish a communication with Pichegru "through the medium of a person of more ability, steadiness, and knowledge."

Rusillion's credentials consisted of "a short, insignificant note," which Wickham signed under the same name and wrote in the same disguised hand as on the previous occasion on which he had addressed himself directly to Pichegru. The general was now living near Vesoul, at the so-called Chateau de Bellevaux, in reality a former abbot's house, which he had recently purchased. His establishment consisted of "a genteel young man who appeared to act as his secretary, a servant, a groom and three or four horses." Rusillion, who was well known to him by reputation, seems to have experienced no difficulty in gaining access to him. After they had "conversed for half-an-hour upon indifferent subjects," Rusillion observed suddenly,

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, III. pp. 168-169.

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"General, I believe we are alone." At this remark Pichegru displayed signs of great uneasiness, and, rising from his chair, began "to look about the room, as though he thought it possible that some one might be concealed there. Do not be alarmed," said Rusillion, "it is only that I have a letter for a person of the name of Baptiste, which I thought might be for you." Pichegru desired to see it, and, having scanned the handwriting and signature, invited his visitor "to go with him into his closet and smoke a pipe." As soon as the door was closed behind them, he explained that, ever since he had left Paris, he had been followed by spies, "even in this little village," and that he was, in consequence, suspicious of everybody. "But now tell me, Major," said he, "what do these gentlemen want and what can I do for their service?"

Having lit a pipe, Rusillion replied that he was instructed to confer with him on three points. Firstly, he was charged to ascertain whether he considered that "anything" could be effected at the present time, either in Franche-Comté, or in some other province. Secondly, he was directed to furnish him with any information which he might require; and thirdly, he was to ask him whether he would object to meet and discuss matters with M. de Précý. With regard to the first question, Pichegru declared emphatically that no good result was to be expected from an insurrection, either in his own province of Franche-Comté, or, indeed, in any other part of France, except possibly in Paris, "unless the Austrians should beat our armies completely, which they are fully able to do." . . . "My army was not beaten enough last year or I should have been completely the master of it. I did, and suffered to be done, everything that could be done with prudence, and my army was certainly better disposed than any other, but I soon saw very plainly that, unless we were completely beaten, I

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ought not to attempt to go any further." He had a very high opinion of M. de Pr cy and would have much pleasure in arranging an interview at an early date. He would, therefore, prefer not to answer any questions until after his meeting with that gentleman. Supper being upon the table, Rusillion considered that it would be prudent to bring their confabulation to an end, and he, accordingly, took his departure. Pichegru made no attempt to detain him, but, as he went away, bade him tell those who had sent him that it was his firm conviction that "something might be done at Paris," where he had little doubt that two or three hundred resolute men would suffice to exterminate all those "scoundrels."

When relating to Wickham the story of his visit, Rusillion seems to have spoken in the highest terms of Pichegru's demeanour, throughout their interview, and to have described his conversation as, at the same time, "plain, deliberate and animated." He had, he reported, little to say about himself, his only complaint being that "he had not brought a waggon-load of tobacco with him out of Holland." Rusillion's story appears to have given great pleasure to Mr. Wickham. It was satisfactory for many reasons, he informed Lord Grenville, but, especially, because it confirmed the good opinion which he had formed of his agents and of Pichegru himself. It was gratifying to discover that the general's views, about the only conditions under which an insurrection should be attempted in Franche-Comt , coincided so completely with his own. With regard to that matter Rusillion had returned at a most opportune moment. The Duc de la Vauguyon had just arrived at Berne with an extravagant scheme which had been conceived in the council chamber at Riegel. Pichegru was to be asked to head an attempt to seize the citadel of Besan on, and it was suggested that his influence, combined with a bribe of 5000 *louis*,

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which sum Wickham was to be invited to supply, would suffice "to gain over Kellermann and even Bonaparte in the midst of his victories."¹

The already quoted letter, which Louis XVIII. had addressed to Pichegru, shortly after his arrival at Riegel,² was not the only communication which passed between the exiled Bourbon and the general of the French Republic. On May 24, he wrote to him through the channel of Demougé to confirm the promise of rewards made to him by Condé, at the beginning of their correspondence. The rupture of the armistice, wrote Louis, was a striking proof of the high respect entertained for his military judgment by the Imperial Cabinet. No one but he could have persuaded the Emperor to open the campaign upon the Rhine. "In him the courage of a Saxe," added the King, "was to be found combined with the high-mindedness of a Turenne and the modesty of a Catinat."³

Louis had written in this strain under the belief that the Austrians were about to embark upon an offensive campaign in Alsace. The plan of inviting Pichegru to place himself at the head of an insurrection at Besançon, and of attempting to win over to the Royal cause the two principal generals of the army of Italy, was the consequence of the decision of the Court of Vienna to adopt a strictly defensive attitude in the valley of the Rhine. Fauche, having undertaken to submit the project to Pichegru, was entrusted with a second letter from Louis to that officer and was directed to accompany the Duc de la Vauguyon to Berne. In this letter, which was dated June 9, 1796, the King assured Pichegru that, in spite of the disastrous effect of events in Italy upon the military policy of Austria,

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 374-378.

² V. p. 142.

³ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 33-34.

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he was still convinced that he was destined to be the means of restoring the monarchy. But, should he be compelled to leave France, Louis begged him to believe that "a haven of refuge awaited him between the Prince de Condé and himself."¹

Wickham, being in a position to quote Pichegru's opinion about the futility of insurrections under existing military conditions, unhesitatingly rejected the plan of inciting a rising at Besançon. But, although he would seem to have entertained no great hope that it would prove successful, he had no particular objections to make to the second part of the scheme. Fauche was, accordingly, allowed to proceed upon his journey, his mission being reduced to the task of ascertaining Pichegru's views about the expediency of making advances to Bonaparte and Kellermann. But a letter from Louis XVIII. to Wickham suggests that he had, also, been charged to ascertain as much as possible about Pichegru's designs and his political sentiments in general. He would seem to have started from Berne unprovided with money, but to have been empowered to ask for financial assistance, in case of need, of the Chevalier de Tessonnet, one of Wickham's agents, who was established at Lons-le-Saunier. Fauche, however, seems to have considered that the permission he had received to apply, in certain circumstances, for help, entitled him to draw at will upon the funds which the British minister had placed at the disposal of the Royalist agency. Accordingly, having crossed the frontier in the character of a travelling watch-maker, he proceeded direct to Lons-le-Saunier, where he seems to have obtained about 500 *louis* from a certain Broc d'Hotelans, who in the temporary absence of Tessonnet, was in charge of the Royalist exchequer. Pichegru was at this time on a visit to Arbois, his native village, and thither Fauche made haste to follow him. He admits

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 35-37.

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himself that he experienced some difficulty in obtaining an interview with him. According to the account which he has left of this episode in his *Mémoires*, it was at four o'clock in the morning that he succeeded in gaining admission to Pichegru's house and in holding some conversation with him, while he was still in bed.

Pichegru, relates Fauche, testified both surprise and regret that the Austrians should have renounced their plan of an offensive campaign. Their conduct of the war was, he declared, incomprehensible. If the Court of Vienna should insist upon the departure of Louis from Condé's army, let him bow to its decision. In whatever country he might be, true Frenchmen would know where to find him. But he could assure him that he must renounce all idea of ascending the throne of his ancestors, unless he could resign himself to grant a constitution to his people. Repeating what he had already said to Rusillon, he declared that local insurrections could effect nothing, until the regular armies of the Republic should be decisively defeated. He considered it inadvisable to endeavour to establish an understanding with either of the two chief generals of the army of Italy. Kellermann, he believed, was not disinclined to serve the cause of the monarchy, but the present moment was singularly unfavourable for seeking to enter into relations with him. As for Bonaparte, "he was a rash young man infatuated by success" to whom it would be useless to make advances. With regard to the projected conference with M. de Précý, he was so beset by spies that he could not think of meeting him at present. He had some thoughts, he said in conclusion, of standing as a candidate for the assembly at the next elections. In taking leave of him Fauche, anxious to spare his feelings, slipped under the bed-clothes the belt containing the money which he had procured at Lons-le-Saunier.¹

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 42-50.

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Wickham, it is clear, was greatly impressed by Pichegru's advice to the King. It so happened, moreover, that at this very time the Royalist agents in Paris, Brottier and Duverne de Presles, to whom he was in the habit of remitting large sums of money, were tendering the same counsels. They were no less convinced than Pichegru that the King must abate the pretensions set up in the proclamation, which he had issued the year before from Verona. But all Wickham's efforts were unavailing to induce him to conform to advice so unpalatable. Abuses he would be prepared to correct, reforms he would inaugurate, but, rather than consent to the permanent establishment of representative government in France, he would renounce the crown.¹ When Louis was thus refusing to depart from the absolutist traditions of his House, his personal situation was deplorable. The retreat of the Archduke, in face of the invasion of Germany by Moreau and Jourdan, necessarily entailed the withdrawal of Condé's army from the banks of the Rhine. The King, thereupon, deferring to the orders of the Court of Vienna, took leave of his followers in arms and wearily set out to discover a sovereign who would allow him to reside upon his territory. Not without difficulty he obtained from the reigning Duke a grudging permission to take up his abode at Blankenburg, in the Duchy of Brunswick. But so destitute was his condition that Wickham had felt constrained to send him 1000 *louis*, lest in his wanderings he should be deprived of the most ordinary comforts of life.²

The military situation, during the four months which followed Fauche's mission to Arbois, put an end to further communications between Pichegru and

¹ F. O. Switzerland 18, Wickham to Grenville, July 16 and 18, 1796. *Fortescue Papers*, III. p. 223. *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 416.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 426.

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the agents of the correspondence. Condé was occupied exclusively in resisting the advance of the armies of the Republic. Although determined that the Royalists should take no part in a successful invasion of France, the Court of Vienna was pleased to allow them to expend their blood in defending the territories of the Empire. Wickham, meanwhile, watched from Berne the progress of events, and was careful to avoid furnishing the Directory with any excuse for demanding his expulsion of the Swiss government.¹ Fauche, in consequence, reluctantly abandoned the exciting life of a secret political agent and retired to Neufchatel, to resume the peaceful existence of a printer and seller of books.² Demougé, cut off from communications with the Austrian headquarters, remained quietly at Strasburg, while Badonville, no longer a staff officer, took part in the campaign as the second-in-command of a cavalry regiment in Moreau's army. Montgaillard set out on a visit to Italy, but his proceedings in that country will be related in another chapter. Lastly, Pichegru himself resided undisturbed in Franche-Comté, his popularity³ throughout the country being so great that the success of his candidature at the next elections could be predicted with confidence. No more seems to have been heard of his projected embassy to Stockholm. It is not clear, however, whether he definitely declined to proceed thither, or whether, hearing nothing from him, the Directory concluded that he was not desirous of filling the diplomatic post which had been offered him.

The retreat of the Austrians was incomprehensible to Craufurd. It was not the Archduke, whose conduct was always "manly and spirited," but Bellegarde, the chief of the staff, whom he held responsible for the

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 419 and 425.

² Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. p. 58.

³ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 430, 433 and 440.

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successive abandonment of position after position. "The enemy," he complained bitterly, "were allowed to manœuvre as they pleased. . . . They threaten our communications, but we dare not march against theirs." Nevertheless, he believed that the situation might yet be saved, could General Mack, for whose ability he had conceived a high admiration in Flanders, be appointed quartermaster-general of the army.¹ It is curious that, able and experienced officer as he was, he would not seem to have realized for a moment the profound wisdom of the Archduke's plan. It was not until the Austrians were holding a central position upon the Danube between Ulm and Ratisbon, while Moreau and Jourdan were widely divided from each other by the river, that he notes a slight improvement in the situation. But it is evident that he had little faith in the success of the operation which was to raise the Archduke to a foremost place among the great strategists of those warlike times. General La Tour, he reported, on August 17, was left behind with orders to hold the line of the Lech, while, "with the remainder of the army, the Archduke will attempt to manœuvre." It was very possible, Craufurd concluded, that he might thus contrive "to check the enemy for two or three weeks."²

How the Archduke fell in overwhelming force upon Jourdan and drove him across the Rhine, how Moreau, finding himself isolated, executed a masterly retreat, are matters of general history. Craufurd was, however, not destined to witness the triumph of the Austrians, nor was he to participate in their relentless pursuit of the Army of the Sambre and Meuse. At Amberg, on August 25, in the first hour of victory,

¹ F. O. Army in Germany 10 and 11, Craufurd to Grenville, July 11, 19, 1796.

² F. O. Army in Germany 11, Craufurd to Grenville, August 17, 1796.

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he fell desperately wounded into the hands of the French. The Archduke courteously arranged for his immediate exchange and, in the course of time, he recovered from a wound which, it had been feared, must prove fatal. But, meanwhile, it devolved upon his brother to keep the government in London informed of the progress of military events in Germany.

Whether for private reasons, or because, on hearing of the Archduke's victories, he desired to draw closer to the scene of operations, Pichegru, about the middle of September, arrived at Weissenburg, in Alsace, on a visit to the Lajolais. Mention¹ has been made in a former chapter of his intimacy with this couple. General Lajolais had recently been placed on half-pay by the Directory, and had, in consequence, taken no part in the campaign. Pichegru seems to have remained with his disreputable friends, until the appearance of Austrian cavalry in the neighbourhood rendered Weissenburg an undesirable place of residence. The Lajolais, thereupon, returned to Strasburg, whither Pichegru himself shortly afterwards proceeded, arriving in the town, on October 13, on the same day as General Moreau.² That officer, having carried his army through the defiles of the Black Forest and having brought it in safety to Friburg in Breisgau, saw fit to leave it in order to visit Strasburg. His departure, declares Gouvion-Saint-Cyr,³ who at the time commanded a division under Moreau, was kept so secret that he himself only heard of it some years later. It was, he considers, a most ill-advised proceeding. If he desired to obtain information about the Archduke's dispositions, he could have attained that object far more effectually

¹ V. p. 23.

² G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 284-285.

³ Gouvion-Saint-Cyr, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 331-332. Moreau's letter to the Directory explaining why he was at Strasburg, dated October 15, 1796, is given at the end of the volume.

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by remaining with his army. But, when Gouvion wrote his *Mémoires*, he had clearly no idea that Moreau's main purpose in visiting Strasburg was to confer with Pichegru. Had that fact been within his knowledge, assuredly he would have passed a far severer judgment upon the conduct of his former commander. The simultaneous arrival of Moreau and Pichegru at Strasburg cannot have been a mere coincidence.

Seeing that Moreau kept his departure from his army a secret from his principal lieutenants, it is to be presumed that he also took steps to conceal his return to Strasburg from all but one or two officers of the garrison. Yet Pichegru, who held no official position, learnt of it at once and was admitted to an interview. Their meeting, without doubt, must have been arranged beforehand, and they must, in consequence, have been in the habit of corresponding during the campaign. The brilliant manner in which Moreau carried out his retreat, the skill and determination which he displayed in the operations immediately following his interview with Pichegru, seem to preclude the possibility that he can have been a traitor to the Republic. His conduct in leaving his headquarters may have been injudicious, but it was surely excusable, if he were actuated merely by a desire to take counsel of an old friend, who was, also, an officer of high repute. If Moreau's subsequent career had been different, so simple an explanation of his reasons for visiting Strasburg might be accepted unreservedly. But in view of certain of his later proceedings, which will be related in due course, the suspicion must arise that he was at this time aware, if not of Pichegru's relations with the enemy, at least of his extreme hostility to the Directory. It is conceivable, therefore, that political, rather than strategical, questions were the subject of their deliberations at Strasburg. But all that can be said with certainty about this



MOREAU.

From an engraving after a drawing by J. Guerin

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mysterious affair is that, on October 14, the two officers met and conferred and that, immediately after their interview, Pichegru sent for Demougé and made an important communication to him:

Moreau, Pichegru told the Austrian spy, was elated by his successful escape from a very perilous situation. He had, therefore, considered it unwise to sound him as to his political views, nor would it be advisable that the Austrians should attempt to effect an understanding with him. Suggestions of that kind must be held in reserve, until he should be decisively defeated in the field. And, provided the Austrians would act promptly, he might be overwhelmed completely. Proud as he was of his achievements, he had not concealed from him, continued Pichegru, that he had still many difficulties to overcome. His army had suffered heavily in its retreat, and his preparations for re-crossing the Rhine were not yet complete. It was certain, and no one was more alive to the fact than Moreau himself, that, were he to be vigorously attacked in the course of the next few days, he might be "entirely beaten and put to the rout." Demougé, be it noted, when he transmitted an account of this conversation to his employers, expressed the conviction that, notwithstanding Pichegru's statement to the contrary, a complete understanding on political matters existed between the two generals.¹

Moreau, as is well known, after attempting to cross the Rhine at Kehl, changed his dispositions and, on October 25 and 26, 1796, successfully effected the passage of the river at Hüninguen. The Austrian measures for dealing with him appear to have been executed with little vigour. At first sight, therefore, it would seem as though Pichegru's message, if it ever reached the Archduke's headquarters, must have been treated as a *ruse de guerre* and that, far from

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 471-472.

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stimulating the Austrians to greater boldness, it had the contrary effect of rendering them over-cautious. Documentary evidence, however, exists to prove that, as he approached the Rhine, the Archduke expressed a wish that steps should be taken for re-opening the correspondence with Pichegru. It is probable that it was by his desire that, about the beginning of October, Wickham recalled Fauche from Neufchatel and posted him at Basle, in order to facilitate communications with Strasburg and Franche-Comté. Badonville, moreover, who is described by Wickham¹ as Pichegru's "right-hand man," having been wounded and taken prisoner, had promptly entered into relations with General Froelich. The Austrians had eagerly availed themselves of his disposition to furnish them with information and he had recently been released on parole, pending his exchange, and sent back to Strasburg, in order that he might continue to supply the headquarters staff with intelligence. It would appear, nevertheless, that the Archduke paid little heed to the intimation that Moreau would be unable to withstand an attack in force. M. Caudrillier² concludes that the message must have reached him too late to be of any practical use. The usual practice of sending the correspondence across the Rhine to Offenburg could not be adopted, he points out, on this occasion, because the Baronne de Reich was not at her post. It had, in consequence, to be conveyed to Basle, where it would be Fauche's business to transmit it to its destination, and this circumstance necessarily involved delay. This may be the reason why the betrayal of Moreau's difficulties entailed no serious consequences upon that officer. But a study of the campaign³ suggests another

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 471.

² G. Caudrillier, *La Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 287 and note.

³ The best account in French is that given by Gouvion-Saint-Cyr in his *Mémoires*.

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explanation. The Archduke was at this time upon the Elz, about half-way between Kehl and Hüninguen, and, therefore, at no great distance from Basle. It is very possible that he did receive Pichegru's message, about October 20, on which date another copy of it seems to have reached Mr. Wickham at Berne. But anxious, as he, doubtless, was, to comply with the advice it contained, it is very far from certain that it was in his power effectually to carry it out. When, having driven Jourdan across the Rhine, he resolved to turn south in order to settle matters with Moreau, he seems to have considered it necessary to leave an imposing body of troops in observation upon the Lower Rhine. Moreau's army, however, was still a formidable fighting force. Fatigues and hardships had thinned its ranks, but the severity of the campaign had also greatly reduced the effective strength of the Austrians. It may be surmised, in consequence, that the Archduke had neither the moral nor the numerical superiority to enable him to defeat Moreau decisively and "put him to the rout."

The successful withdrawal of the Army of the Rhine to the left bank of the river extinguished Pichegru's hopes that it would meet with a disaster, which would impel the soldiers to insist upon his reinstatement. In a second interview with Demougé,¹ on October 23, while the situation was still critical, he announced his intention of going to Paris, should his old army escape from the fate which he still believed was in store for it. Were Moreau, contrary to his previsions, to contrive to re-cross the Rhine, it were idle for him to linger on at Strasburg or in Franche-Comté, in expectation of some great military disaster. Unless the army could be overwhelmed, the blow which should destroy the Directory must be struck in Paris. But, in order to concert measures against the government in the

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 288-289.

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capital, he must have at his disposal a large sum of money.¹

Wickham was, as may be supposed, greatly elated at the prospect that Moreau might be decisively defeated. The Archduke's victories had subdued the arrogance of the French party in Switzerland² and it was, in consequence, no longer necessary that he should observe the circumspection which had marked his conduct, when it seemed probable that the Republican armies of the Rhine were about to unite with Bonaparte under the walls of Vienna. On receipt of Demougé's news, he, accordingly, proceeded to Basle, in order that he might rapidly communicate with Pichegru, in the event of a serious disaster overtaking General Moreau. Here he was greeted by Fauche with the news that that officer had crossed the Rhine in safety, and that Pichegru considered that all hope of effecting the overthrow of the Directory by means of the army must be abandoned, for the present. In these circumstances, Mr. Wickham decided to put an end to the expenditure in connection with the correspondence, unless Pichegru himself should invite him to continue it, and should inform him "directly" of the object to which the money was to be devoted. Presumably, when he used the word "directly," he wished it to be understood that no appeals for money would in the future be listened to, if made through the channel of Demougé. That individual was greatly disturbed when informed by Fauche of Wickham's intentions. The Austrians were niggardly paymasters and, were the British minister to adopt their parsimonious methods, the profession of a spy would, indeed, offer few attractions. Pichegru was no longer at Strasburg,

¹ G. Caudrillier, *La Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 291. The letter in question from Demougé to Fauche appears to be among the *Chantilly Papers*. It is not, however, referred to by Wickham.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, I. p. 464.

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having recently set out for Besançon. But Badonville, who could not return to duty, until his exchange should be effected, was staying in the town. It may be assumed that he was no less dismayed than Demougé, when he learnt that he need expect to receive no more English gold in the future. He agreed, accordingly, to start off at once in pursuit of Pichegru and beg him to intervene directly.¹ He was so far successful that, on November 10, he arrived at Basle bringing with him two letters for Mr. Wickham. One was written in Pichegru's usual hand and the other in the musical cipher which he had before employed.

Unfortunately, Wickham had quitted Basle and returned to Berne and Badonville was, in consequence, unable to see him. He had leave to proceed to Basle only and he dared not venture to extend his journey to Berne. In these circumstances he was compelled to entrust the two letters to Demougé whom he, also, charged to repeat to Wickham a conversation, which he had had with Pichegru on the road to Besançon. The note in cipher referred to the question of the continuation of the pecuniary supplies, and the one in ordinary writing to the political situation, while the verbal message dealt with both these matters in detail and at the same time explained the reasons of certain of Pichegru's past actions.

Pichegru was of opinion that, at the present moment, any expenditure of money either among the troops or in attempts to gain over particular persons would certainly prove useless and, perhaps even, harmful. But he was anxious that "certain engagements entered into for the purpose of saving the agent, Fauche, might be strictly executed." This is a reference, presumably, to the bribes administered to the jailer and, possibly, to the investigating magistrate in connection with Fauche's release from prison at

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 291-292.

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Strasburg. Furthermore, he begged Mr. Wickham to continue to pay an allowance to each of the two officers to whom he had communicated "the whole affair from the beginning." One of the two persons, here alluded to, was certainly Badonville himself and the other was, probably, a battalion commander, a certain Major Tugnot. It may be conjectured that it was owing to his friendship with Badonville that this officer was initiated into the affair. In later years, when charges of complicity with Pichegru were preferred against him, Tugnot appears to have contrived to clear himself so effectually that, in 1808, he was created a baron of the Empire by Bonaparte.¹ General Klinglin's correspondence, however, establishes his guilt conclusively. Not only was he privy to Pichegru's treason, but, on his own account, he seems to have furnished the Austrian staff with information.

Passing on to the political situation, Pichegru could only regret that Moreau had not been decisively defeated. Nevertheless, he believed that public opinion, throughout the country, was growing more hostile to the Directory. He would, before long, go to Paris, and it would be convenient that he should be accompanied by Demougé, who might carry on his correspondence, "he being determined to commit nothing more to paper in his own hand." In that event it would be necessary that a credit should be opened in Paris, either in his own, or in Demougé's, favour. With regard to his conduct while in command of the Army of the Rhine, in the campaign of the previous year, he could assure Mr. Wickham that it was not his fault that the Austrians had not achieved greater success. On no less than four different occasions "he had favoured them to the utmost of his power." Having delayed to cross the Rhine as long

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 187 and 290.

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as he dared, he had effected his passage with an insufficient number of men. When Mannheim was about to be invested, he had selected the worst troops in his army to defend it and had placed at their head "a man quite incapable of commanding them." In the subsequent operations he had twice deliberately exposed his whole army to defeat, "in such a way as no Republican general had ever done before or since." Lastly, Pichegru expressed a real, or a pretended, anxiety about the objects which England was seeking to attain. It was said that Mr. Pitt desired simply to promote anarchy and foment disorder in France. He had heard that "the government, or at least some powerful party in England," was secretly assisting both the Jacobins and the Orleanists. Badonville was especially charged to obtain from Mr. Wickham some assurance which should set his mind at rest upon that point.¹

Wickham at once wrote out, in his ordinary handwriting and in the presence of Demougé, a letter of reply. With regard to the question of money, he could promise him that one of his agents should follow him to Paris and be furnished with the credit he required. He adjured General Pichegru to continue the good work he had begun, but to be very careful. His enemies were clever, cunning and, on occasion, daring. But the triumph of the wicked, although it might last long, could not endure for ever. It pained him to think that Baptiste (Pichegru) could have harboured any doubts about the good faith of his government. He could assure him in the most solemn manner that no responsible person in England would ever favour the rival of the *Grand Bourgeois* (Louis XVIII.), nor assist the infamous projects of the Jacobins and Terrorists. Proposals coming from either of those quarters would be rejected with the scorn and the

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 491-495.

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indignation which they must arouse in the heart of every man animated by any sense of justice, honour, or patriotism.¹

About six weeks later, Wickham received further news of Pichegru, again through the channel of Badonville. While on the Lower Rhine the opposing armies had concluded an armistice and gone into winter quarters, the Archduke still carried on hostilities and began to besiege both Kehl and Hüninguen. Being desirous of acquiring information about these fortresses, he had caused Badonville to be invited to repair to his headquarters at Offenburg. But Pichegru, when consulted by Badonville about the expediency of acceding to this request, had strongly advised him to decline it. A journey to neutral territory was, however, not open to the same objections as a visit to the enemy's headquarters. He might without incurring suspicion obtain, under some pretext, leave to go to Switzerland, where he could discuss the situation with the British minister who would send on the intelligence to the Archduke. This plan was adopted and thus Wickham was afforded an opportunity of conversing with Badonville. It is much to be regretted that he neither appears to have attempted any description of the man, nor to have informed Lord Grenville of the impression which he made upon him.

Pichegru, declared Badonville, was convinced that the disgust and fatigue of the troops was growing apace. So far as was possible, "without committing himself too deeply, and without quitting the language of a republican, he had striven to increase their discontent." In these circumstances it was of primary importance that the Austrians should continue to harass them relentlessly. The Archduke, he hoped sincerely, would refuse to conclude an armistice, and thus prevent them from taking up their winter quarters.

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 476-477 and 495.

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But should the exhaustion of his own troops compel him to grant a truce, it should be of brief duration, and the conditions should be drawn up in such a way that the next campaign could be opened at very short notice. The armies constituted the whole strength of the Directory. So long as they were in being the government would always be able "to find finances either within, or without, their own territory." For the present he had renounced the idea of going to Paris. He intended to stand for his own district at the elections in the spring and he was confident that he would be returned successfully. But, in the meantime, he would remain in Franche-Comté ready to take advantage of every opportunity which might arise of influencing the army. Although, continued Badonville, Pichegru had only admitted one other officer besides himself into his confidence, most of the generals were "fully persuaded of what he was about." Most certainly the Directors had little doubt about his real sentiments. But Pichegru was not disturbed on that account, seeing that it was not in their power to procure any confirmation of their suspicions.¹

Badonville carried away from Berne a liberal supply of money. "I have sent you by Coco" (Badonville), wrote Wickham to Pichegru on January 9, 1797, "2000 *louis*. You can have more if you wish. I only ask you to let me know the nature of the use that you wish to make of them, without entering too much into details."² During the next few months Rusillion and other persons in the employment of Mr. Wickham visited Pichegru at Bellevaux and at Strasburg. The general, however, had no new plan to propose nor fresh suggestion to offer. The military situation was developing in a manner which made it very improbable that any change would be brought about through the

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, II. pp. 21-25.

² *Ibid.*, II. p. 4.

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discontent of the troops. Kehl, on January 9, 1797, and Hüninguen on February 1 capitulated to the Archduke. But the capture of these two places was a slender compensation for the defeats which Bonaparte continued to inflict upon the Imperial armies in Italy.

Ever since the early summer the struggle had been raging for the possession of Mantua. For a brief moment, when Wurmser contrived to raise the siege, it seemed as if the veteran marshal might prove a match for his young opponent. But his triumph was not of long duration. Out-manceuvred he was driven to take refuge inside the walls of the fortress it had been his task to relieve. A third army under Alvintzy fared no better. Arcola and Rivoli were inscribed upon the roll of French victories and, on February 2, 1797, Mantua surrendered. Bonaparte could now carry out his long-matured plan of advancing through the Tyrol to unite with the armies of the Rhine, within a few days' march of Vienna. Moreau and Hoche, who, fresh from his expedition to Bantry Bay, had recently been appointed to the command of the Army of the Sambre and Meuse, were, accordingly, directed from Paris to denounce the armistice and begin hostilities. The Archduke, after Rivoli, had been summoned away and placed in charge of the army which was forming to defend the hereditary possessions of the Empire. The command of the Austrians in the valley of the Rhine had thus passed to Mack who, in a recent conversation with Wickham, announced his intention of retreating to Ulm, should the French cross the river.¹ But, on this occasion, he was not to be afforded an opportunity of putting into practice the plan, which was to end in the frightful catastrophe with which the "unfortunate" general's name has always been associated. Hoche and Moreau forced the passage of the Rhine and opened the campaign in brilliant fashion. But their

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, II. pp. 31-33.

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forward movement was quickly suspended. Bonaparte had concluded an armistice which was to apply to both theatres of war and, a few days later, this truce was converted into a preliminary treaty of peace, which was signed, on April 18, 1797, at his headquarters, at Léoben, not more than seventy miles distance from Vienna. Thus were Craufurd's misgivings realized that Austria would be driven to make a separate peace with "the common enemy" and that England would find herself alone in "this great contest."

CHAPTER VIII

THE ELECTIONS OF THE YEAR V

NEVER since the days of the Great Armada had England stood in greater danger than in 1797. While Bonaparte had been dealing Austria heavy blows in Italy, Spain had concluded a treaty of defensive and offensive alliance with the Directory. France, Holland, Spain, the three naval Powers of the continent, were thus England's declared enemies. It had always been regarded as the worst misfortune which could overtake her that the two branches of the House of Bourbon should combine against her. If, as the war of American Independence had proved, such an alliance presented no imaginary dangers under old conditions, it were reasonable to suppose that the peril would be the deadlier, now that the monarchy in France had given place to a military democracy. The Spanish declaration of war was followed by the evacuation of the Mediterranean by the British fleet. In this same winter of 1796, Mr. Pitt, with the grudging consent of George III.,¹ and contrary to the opinion of some of his principal colleagues, made another attempt to come to terms with France. Lord Malmesbury was allowed to proceed to Paris, but his proposal that Belgium should be restored to Austria as a preliminary to a general settlement was declared unacceptable and, on December 19, he was peremptorily ordered to leave the country.

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, III. p. 256.

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Two days before, Hoche had set sail from Brest for the coast of Ireland. His expedition failed, but its ill-success was due to the elements, not to the interposition of the English fleet. That his attempt would be repeated at no distant date was hardly doubtful. Ireland was seething with discontent and the leading patriots, it was notorious, were in communication with the Directory.

In London a disposition on the part of the public to withdraw their deposits combined with large exportations of *specie* to the continent for military purposes, had dangerously depleted the gold reserve. So critical was the position that, to avert a financial catastrophe of the first magnitude, an Order in Council was issued, on February 26, 1797, suspending cash payments and declaring banknotes legal tender. A few days later, the general gloom was relieved by the news of a naval victory which, by preventing the junction of the French and Spanish fleets, had diminished the danger of invasion. Sir John Jervis, while cruising off Cape St. Vincent with fifteen British ships, had encountered a Spanish squadron numbering twenty-seven sail, on its way to unite with the French fleet at Brest, and had defeated it completely and driven it back into Cadiz. But a greater trial than any by which it had as yet been confronted was in store for the nation. Discontent at the conditions of their life had for some time past been rife among the sailors. On April 15, 1797, a mutiny, which had been carefully prepared, broke out at Spithead and continued until the Admiralty yielded to all the men's demands. But scarcely had order and discipline been restored than an even graver state of affairs arose at the Nore. Fortunately, the Directory was either unable to take advantage of the situation or failed to realize its extreme seriousness. It is significant that the 3 per cent. consols which

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had not fallen below 50 during the financial panic declined to 48, their lowest point, on the news of the mutiny at the Nore.

Could England, without an ally and without an army, with disaffection in her fleet and with rebellion preparing in Ireland, continue the struggle? This was the momentous question which the government had to answer. Mr. Pitt was determined that another attempt should be made to conclude a peace. His colleagues, however, were far from unanimous on that point. Nevertheless, on June 15, 1797, on the day when the mutineers at the Nore made their submission, the Cabinet decided that the course advocated by the Prime Minister should be adopted. At Léoben Austria had surrendered her former possessions in the Netherlands, it being stipulated in the secret articles of the treaty that she should receive compensation at the expense of the Republic of Venice. England, consequently, if she desired to end the war, must resign herself to see Belgium converted into a French province and Holland become a Republic entirely dependent upon France. It was not certain, however, that peace could be obtained even by submitting to these conditions. There was reason to fear that the five rulers of France regarded a complete cessation of hostilities as incompatible with their retention of power. On the other hand, there were not wanting signs that a strong party was forming resolved to oppose their methods of government. The elections were bringing into the assembly new men of moderate and pacific views. Should the Chambers declare in favour of peace, the Directors would be obliged to submit, unless, as was not improbable, they should decide to resort to unconstitutional measures for overcoming the will of the majority. It was very possible, however, that the adoption of this last alternative might entail

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their complete ruin. The country was growing tired of revolutionary methods and was anxious to see peace and orderly forms of government restored. Clearly, therefore, the more conciliatory the attitude of England the more would this feeling be strengthened and the lighter would be the task of the opposition in its parliamentary struggle with the Directorial party.

Wickham, as has been shown, was now convinced of the futility of fomenting local insurrections. Moreover, during the course of the past year, the confabulations at Riegel and enabled him closely to observe Louis XVIII. and the persons who composed his council. The exiled King, he was satisfied, was both in ability and in judgment far superior to the majority of his courtiers and so-called ministers.¹ Nevertheless, it was a real misfortune that he should be constantly surrounded by men who were either incapable of understanding, or were wilfully blind to, the state of public feeling in France. Aristocratic as were Wickham's instincts his relations with *émigrés* of noble birth had not increased his respect for them. While he heartily sympathized with their misfortunes, he was constantly irritated by their lack of political discernment and their habits of intrigue. If, when he first arrived in Switzerland, he may justly be charged with having misunderstood the character of the Revolution, in 1797, his conception of one of its most important effects was sound and statesmanlike. The middle classes, he rightly perceived, were to be the immediate gainers by the political changes which had convulsed France. "It has long been evident," he wrote on April 12, 1797, "and I have constantly holden that language at Blankenburg,² that the monarchy is entirely in the

¹ F. O. Switzerland 17, Wickham to Grenville, May 5, 1796. F. O. Army in Germany 9, Craufurd to Grenville, May 5, 11, 1796. *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 365, 418-419.

² That is in the advice he conveyed to the King who was residing at Blankenburg in the Duchy of Brunswick.

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hands of the third estate. It is, also, my firm opinion that the true interests of the King, as well as those of the nobility (I might add those of Europe), are much safer in their hands than in those of the ancient Court or of the old nobility.”¹

In accordance with the spirit of his original instructions, Wickham had, hitherto, decidedly favoured the views of the “pure” Royalists. Although they had, in the first instance, sent him to Switzerland to negotiate with the constitutionalists, Pitt and Grenville would seem to have considered that the restoration of absolutism would facilitate the task of re-establishing stable government in France. It is probable that they were, also, disposed to think that better terms of peace could be concluded with a despotic ruler than with a sovereign bound to defer to the will of a popularly elected and patriotic assembly. Wickham, during the first eighteen months of his stay in Switzerland, regarded the matter in the same light. His negotiations with the chiefs of the constitutional party had ended in disappointment, and ever since he had looked upon them with distrust. Furthermore, he was convinced that, notwithstanding their professed admiration for British institutions, they were very hostile to England.² Should they ever contrive to exercise a paramount influence in France, he believed that it would be their policy to create a strong navy and to unite against England the maritime Powers of Europe.³

But to acknowledge the preponderating importance of the middle classes was in effect to recognize that the old *régime* had passed away for ever, and that only a limited type of monarchy could be restored. Wickham, when he declared that the destinies of France

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, April 12, 1797.

² F. O. Switzerland 5 and 8, Wickham to Grenville, January 12 1795; June 6, 1795.

³ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, May 20, 1797.

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were henceforward in the hands of the third estate, wished Lord Grenville to understand that the aims of the "pure" Royalists were unattainable, and that, if the Directory were to be overthrown, it could only be through the agency of the constitutionalists, the party of the middle classes. Moreover, he was firmly persuaded that a parliamentary campaign against the Directory might now be opened with advantage and that in this manner, without resort to violence or armed insurrection, the existence of the Republic might be placed in serious jeopardy. In arriving at this conviction he had been chiefly influenced by the opinions of two men, whose views upon the internal condition of France he held in the highest respect.

In all his recent messages, Pichegru had constantly adverted to the necessity of observing two principles in any plans which might be devised for effecting a restoration of the monarchy. In the first place, it must be understood that public opinion had created the Republic and that it was public opinion only which could destroy it. Secondly, it was no less important to recognize that Louis XVIII. would never sit upon the throne, unless he were prepared to conform to the spirit of the times and endow his people with a constitution. While Pichegru spoke thus, Mr. Wickham received similar advice from a man whose political sagacity he had been quick to recognize. Antoine-Balthazar d'André had sat in the States-General as a representative of the *noblesse* of Provence. In the Constituent Assembly he had figured prominently and, at the same time, would appear to have carried on the business of a sugar merchant. A charge of creating monopolies, preferred against him in 1792, seems to have been the reason of his emigration. Perhaps it was his connection with commerce which caused him definitely to discard the nobiliary particle and to assume the name of Dandré.

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It is not clear when and in what circumstances Wickham's relations with Dandré began. It is evident, however, that, on August 14, 1796, they were already in correspondence, seeing that on that day Dandré drew up and transmitted to the British minister a *memorandum* setting forth his views upon the state of affairs in France. It should be known that under the Directory a system was in force known as that of the *Rota*. Each year one-third of the deputies retired by rotation and a new third had to be elected to replace them. Dandré, being no less convinced than Pichegru that public opinion was the ruling factor in the situation, maintained that a great effort must be made to influence the elections in the spring of 1797. The Directors would be helpless, if, in addition to their opponents among the older members of the two Councils, they were to be confronted by a new third chiefly composed of men who were antagonistic to them. The Constitution of the Year III had not conferred upon them the right of dissolution and had, consequently, deprived them of the power of dealing with a hostile assembly. Let it be the first business of the dominant party, urged Dandré, to move the impeachment of Barras and his colleagues. Let their corrupt practices be exposed and public opinion would assuredly declare in favour of a return to monarchical institutions as the only escape from existing evils.¹

The plan of influencing the elections and of secretly controlling the party in opposition to the Directory was very attractive to Wickham. To bring it to a successful issue money would need to be expended. But his government, he knew well, would consider no price too high to pay for acceptable terms of peace. In Dandré's honesty and dexterity he had complete confidence. Money entrusted to him, he assured Lord

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, March 8, 1797.

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Grenville, would always "be employed to good and efficient purpose."¹ Undoubtedly, his plan was open to objections. The immediate effect of its success would be to make the leaders of the constitutional party the most powerful men in France, and Wickham had not ceased to distrust them because he hoped to make use of them. He was disposed to think, however, that the evils arising from such a development would be more apparent than real. For many years to come he was confident that they would be unable to harm England. Their rise to power would be due "to the opinion of the people and that opinion would be for long in favour of peace and tranquillity."² Nor would it be an easy matter to reconcile Louis XVIII. to the idea of making concessions to the constitutionalists. But Wickham was not greatly disturbed on that account. For the moment the essential object to be attained was the overthrow of the Directory. Once that were achieved, the exiled King would be confronted with an accomplished fact, and would, doubtless, not refuse to negotiate with whatever party should be in a position to invite him to return to France. In the meantime, Wickham was assured by sensible persons desirous of seeing the monarchy restored, that the intervention of the "pure" Royalists would seriously militate against the success of the parliamentary campaign.³ Already there was reason to fear that the arrest of the King's agents, Brottier, Duverne de Presles and La Villehurnois, and the disclosures elicited at their trial would have a prejudicial effect upon the elections.

The exiled Court of Blankenburg had accepted in principle the plan of attempting to destroy the Directory by peaceful means. The Royalists in France had been enjoined to conform to the laws of the

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, April 1, 1797.

² *Ibid.*, March 8, 1797.

³ *Ibid.*, April 12, 1797.

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Republic, while endeavouring to promote the interests of their party by capturing as many seats as possible at the elections and by putting forward their friends, whenever any public appointment should fall vacant.¹ The King's agents in Paris, however, were hopeful of attaining the same result in a more direct and expeditious manner. They had established, they reported, an understanding with some of the senior officers both in the Army of the West and in the garrison of Paris. They were confident that, were the signal to be given by a Prince of the Blood, or even by some hero of the wars of La Vendée, large bodies of Republican troops would declare in favour of the monarchy. During the winter of 1796-1797, Louis XVIII. and his confidential friend, d'Avaray, spent much time in discussing this plan, which was far more in harmony with their views than any scheme of overturning the Directory by the action of a parliamentary party. The selection of the Prince who should re-enter France and remain in hiding, until a suitable opportunity for announcing his presence should arise, was the subject of long and secret deliberation. The Duc de Bourbon, the son of the Prince de Condé, was better fitted than any other member of the Royal family for an adventurous mission. But there was a dynastic objection to entrusting him with the performance of such a task. The three Condés were the only princes who had figured prominently in the revolutionary wars, and Louis was, in consequence, reluctant to give a member of their branch of his House a further opportunity of earning distinction. An elaborate scheme for concealing the true state of affairs was, accordingly, devised. While it was secretly determined to confide this dangerous mission to Louis' nephew, the Duc de Berri, the son of the Comte d'Artois, the courtiers and ministers at

¹ L. de la Sicotière, *L. de Frotte*, II. pp. 36-37.

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Blankenburg were informed that the Duc de Bourbon would return to France to place himself at the head of the projected movement. Duverne de Presles, who was to proceed to England to solicit financial assistance was to practise the same deception upon the British ministers. Only to his fellow agent, Despomelles, was he permitted to disclose the King's real intentions. Neither to Brottier nor to La Villehurnois was the momentous secret to be imparted.¹

When the King's emissary arrived in London negotiations for peace were still proceeding in Paris. So long as a prospect existed of arriving at a settlement, ministers declined to listen to his proposals, and it was not until Lord Malmesbury had been ordered to leave France that Duverne could obtain a hearing. He seems to have insisted upon the probability that the Directors would interfere with the elections and possibly annul them altogether. It was, therefore, very necessary that the Royalists should arm and be prepared to protect the voters and to resist all unconstitutional acts on the part of the government. Nor was that the only reason why the Royalists desired to hold in readiness an armed force. Should the elections go against the Directory, a general movement would, doubtless, ensue in favour of the restoration of the monarchy, and in that case it was essential that the Royalists should be organized for action. So anxious was Mr. Pitt's Cabinet that the French elections should pass off without interruption that, on January 2, 1797, it was agreed to supply the agency in Paris with a monthly allowance of £20,000 for a period of three months. In certain eventualities further payments were to be made.²

After concluding his business with the British government in this satisfactory fashion, Duverne de

¹ E. Daudet, *Histoire de l'Émigration*, II. pp. 38-52.

² *Fortescue Papers*, III. pp. 291 and 305.

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Presles returned to France. In his absence his fellow agents had entered into relations with Colonel Malo, the commandant of the garrison of Paris. Only certain small bodies of regular troops, specially detailed to watch over the safety of the Directors and the two Assemblies, were at that time quartered in the capital. By the terms of the Constitution of the Year III the armies of the Republic must not be stationed within sixty miles of the spot where the legislature held its sittings. When approached by the Royalist plotters, Malo appears to have led them to think that he was disposed to assist them to gain over his men to the cause of the monarchy. He, accordingly, agreed to receive Brottier and La Villeheurnois at his quarters at the École Militaire, on the morning of January 31, 1797. The two Royalist agents proceeded to the appointed place accompanied by Duverne, who had only arrived in Paris a few hours earlier. A disagreeable surprise awaited them. Ever since the first advances had been made to him, Malo had been in communication with the Directory.¹ After allowing his visitors to incriminate themselves thoroughly, in the presence of a second officer, he caused them to be arrested. At their respective lodgings the police seized many important papers. A few weeks later all three men were arraigned before a military tribunal, and, on the night of April 18-19, judgment of death was passed upon them. The Court, however, on the spot commuted its sentence and condemned Brottier and La Villeheurnois to be imprisoned for ten years and Duverne for twelve months only. The leniency with which they were treated calls for an explanation.

Brottier appears to have been convinced, from the moment that he was taken into custody, that he and La Villeheurnois had been betrayed by Duverne de

¹ *Moniteur*, 16 *pluviose*, an V.

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Presles.¹ In this supposition he was, doubtless, mistaken. If the Directory, at the time of their arrest, knew more about their plans than they had themselves revealed to Malo, it was not from Duverne that the information was procured. According to M. Ernest Daudet,² the traitor, in this instance, was the degenerate scion of an ancient family. In his *Histoire de l'Émigration* the following version of the incident is to be found. In order to be in a position to meet and confer with the Royalists, without attracting attention, Wickham's agent, Bayard, had purchased a small restaurant in the Rue de la Loi.³ It was managed by his mistress, a former actress of the name of Meyer, who was entirely ignorant of the nature of the business upon which the majority of her patrons were engaged. Unfortunately, Bayard had not been equally discreet in the case of his intimate friend, the Prince de Carency, the son of the Duc de La Vauguyon, the so-called minister of the exiled King. In the absence of Bayard in Switzerland this young man, having insinuated himself into the good graces of Mlle. Meyer, disclosed to her that her restaurant was used as an habitual place of meeting by a dangerous band of conspirators. The woman was greatly alarmed, and, apparently, but upon that point M. Daudet is not very explicit, communicated with the police at the instigation, presumably, of Carency.

If this account be correct it is evident that Bayard, Wickham's most trusted agent, was not deserving of the confidence he reposed in him. Wickham himself was perfectly aware that Carency was an unscrupulous adventurer. Having a faculty for imitating the English accent, he had, on one occasion, during the summer of 1796, passed himself off as a king's

¹ Forneron, *Histoire de l'Émigration*, II. p. 209.

² E. Daudet, *Histoire de l'Émigration*, II. pp. 58-60.

³ The Rue de Richelieu.

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messenger and thus gained access to his correspondence. "He has infested this country," he privately informed Lord Grenville, "for near twelve months, leading the life of a common swindler." Moreover, by reason of the position which his father occupied at the exiled Court of Blankenburg, he had acquired a knowledge of many matters which should have been kept from him. Consequently, it was with consternation that, towards the end of the year 1796, Wickham discovered that he had left Switzerland and re-entered France. His alarm was increased when he learnt that Brottier had "received him and lodged him in his own apartment."¹

It is evident, therefore, that Wickham regarded Carency with the utmost suspicion and that he strongly deprecated the friendly attitude which Brottier had assumed towards him. But nowhere does he suggest that any blame attaches to Bayard. On the contrary, whenever he mentions his name it is for the purpose of praising his prudence and discretion.² And it is hardly possible that he can have been mistaken about him. He was in the habit of receiving information from so many different quarters that, had Bayard been the boon companion of Carency, so disquieting a piece of news would assuredly have been reported to him. Bayard, it should be borne in mind, was very far from popular with certain Royalists, owing to the faithful manner in which he served Mr. Wickham—a circumstance which makes it not improbable that they may have invented the story, which M. Daudet has reproduced, for the purpose of discrediting him. Indeed, it seems doubtful whether Carency himself was concerned in the affair of the Royalist agents. A few months later, when

¹ F. O. Switzerland 19, Wickham to Grenville, December 15 and 18, 1796.

² F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, May 20, 1797. "Bayard, in whose praise I cannot say too much."

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D'Avaray's jealousy of his father had led to his disgrace and dismissal from Blankenburg, Carency unquestionably entered into communication with the Directory. Barras,¹ while acknowledging his indebtedness to him for information about the Royalists supplied, during the summer of 1797, never suggests that he had any hand in the arrest of Brottier and his companions. Without doubt, in his *Mémoires* Barras often makes untrue statements. On such occasions, however, his motives are as a rule sufficiently obvious. But it is difficult to imagine why he should disclose Carency's treachery in June and, at the same time, conceal the fact that he had acted in a similar fashion in the previous month of January.

With regard to the proceedings of Duverne de Presles it is possible to speak with more assurance. It has been related that doubts about his good faith were expressed by Brottier, shortly after his arrest, and it has been pointed out that his suspicions were almost certainly unfounded. That is a remark, however, which applies only to Duverne's conduct prior to his apprehension by the police. When he found himself in prison and saw in prospect the plain of Grenelle and the firing party, his fortitude gave way. To save his life he agreed to reveal everything he knew about Royalist affairs. Complete as were the disclosures which he was thus induced to make, he appears, nevertheless, to have endeavoured to avoid incriminating persons, actually living in France, to whom no particular suspicion attached. In the course of his confession the names occur frequently of well-known Royalists such as Bourmont, Précý, Frotté, and Bayard. But, irrespective of anything he might say about them, men of that description had no mercy to expect should they fall into the power of the Directory. On the subject of Pichegru, on the other hand, he maintained

¹ Barras, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 471-473.

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a discreet silence, and it is to be presumed that he had some knowledge of that affair. He admitted that the party to which he belonged was in constant communication with the English government. He described in detail a visit which he had paid to Switzerland, "where the British minister was especially charged with the duty of assisting the efforts of the Royalists." He related the story of his recent journey to London and stated the exact sum which Pitt's cabinet had agreed to place at the disposal of the Royalist party. Could it not, he suggested, be made to appear that he had contrived to escape from prison? If that could be arranged he would undertake to maintain a correspondence with London and place the whole of it before the Directors. But the information to which Barras and his colleagues attached the highest value was that which related to the designs of their opponents in the two assemblies. It was the intention of the opposition, declared Duverne, to destroy the Republic under the pretence of conducting a lawful parliamentary campaign against the government, and it was Pitt who would supply the money required for the successful execution of this plan.¹

Duverne's confession was not made public. It was too valuable a document to be made use of lightly. Produced at the right moment, it would serve to justify whatever unconstitutional measures the Directory might see fit to take to defeat the opposition. The merciful manner in which the Royalist agents were treated would, therefore, seem to be explained by the importance attached to Duverne's revelations. Wickham, however, ascribed the commutation of their sentence to a different reason. Being the owner of a fine copy of Le Brun's *Château de Versailles*, Duverne, after his trial, desired to present it, in token of his gratitude, to George III. He,

¹ *Moniteur*, 23 fructidor, an V. Barras, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 322-333.

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accordingly, transmitted it to Wickham requesting that it might be forwarded to England. Wickham complied, and, in writing to Grenville on the subject, on August 28, 1797, makes the following curious statement. "I take this opportunity of mentioning to Your Lordship that the lives of M. Duverne and his companions were purchased for the sum of 1500 *louis d'or* paid after the judgment to the public accuser."¹ But Wickham was at that time unaware of Duverne's revelations. A few days later, however, the *coup d'état* of the 18 *fructidor* took place and the man's confession was published in the *Moniteur*. It would be interesting to know whether, after perusing it, Wickham still considered that it was Pitt's gold which had preserved from death the Royalist agents. Be that as it may, Duverne's gift must have been accepted by George III., seeing that it is now in His Majesty's library at Windsor Castle. The mystery which surrounds the affair is increased by the fact that, when the monarchy was restored in France, Duverne de Presles was created a Knight of Saint Louis.

Pichegru appears to have been seriously disquieted by the arrest of Brottier and his companions. Both to Rusillion and to Broc d'Hotelans he inveighed bitterly against the imprudence of the Royalist agents.² Indeed, so fearful would he seem to have been that traces of his treason would be discovered in their papers that, about the middle of February, 1797, he left Clairevaux and took up his residence at Strasburg, thinking, probably, that the Directory might not venture to arrest him in the midst of his old army. But, as has been related, his apprehensions proved groundless, and, before long, he returned home and

¹ F. O. Switzerland 21, Wickham to Grenville, August 28, 1797.

² F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, February 26, 1797. G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 302-306.

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devoted himself exclusively to the coming elections. His manner of life at this period is described in Wickham's long despatch of March 8, 1797. "His house," wrote Wickham, who, doubtless, derived his information from Rusillion, "was full of Republican officers for whom, as well as for the neighbourhood, he kept an open table plentifully provided, but served with the greatest simplicity, the forks and spoons being of pewter and the dishes all plain."

Notwithstanding that Duverne's confession was not immediately published, the existence of a plot to restore the monarchy was abundantly proved at the trial of the Royalists. Seeing that the re-establishment of the old *régime* was generally dreaded by the middle classes, Wickham was afraid that they would give effect to their fears at the elections.¹ The Directorial candidates, however, appear to have reaped little advantage either from the proceedings before the military court or from Bonaparte's victories in Italy. With few exceptions they were heavily defeated, and the new third, elected in the spring of the year V., consisted almost exclusively of men who, if not convinced Royalists, were opposed both to revolutionary methods of government at home and to Jacobinical ideas of conquest abroad.

An association known as the *Institut Philanthropique* had contributed largely to bring about this result. It had been founded by Despommelles, a colleague of Brottier and Duverne, who, not having been concerned in the negotiations with Malo, had contrived to elude capture by the police. In forming it Despommelles appears to have imitated the organization of freemasonry. Each department was to have its lodge or society, the president of which was to correspond with a head centre in Paris. The avowed

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, March 8, 1797. *Wickham Correspondence*, II. pp. 87-88.

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object of the association was to induce "honest folk" to combine for the purpose of ensuring the defeat of Jacobinical candidates at the elections. But there was in addition an inner ring, that of *Les fils légitimes*, the existence of which was unknown to the mass of the ordinary members. The men who composed it were, without doubt, Royalists whose intention it was to make the *Institut Philanthropique* serve the interests of their cause.¹

The efficiency of this organization appears to have been little impaired by the necessity under which Despommelles was placed of going into hiding, in consequence of the arrest of his fellow agents. Dandré, who had been supplied with an ample credit by Wickham, had in the meantime arrived in Paris.² He appears to have been greatly impressed with the merits of the *Institut Philanthropique*, and, in the absence of its founder, to have directed its efforts most successfully.

Both assemblies were constituted on May 20, 1797, and the initial business of the session served to disclose the strength of parties. The Council of the 500 proceeded to elect as its president Pichegru, the newly elected member for the Jura, while in that of the Ancients Barbé-Marbois, whose Royalist sympathies were notorious, was selected to fill the same office.

¹ G. Caudrillier, *L'Institut Philanthropique*, pp. xi., xii., and 2, 3.

² F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, April 1, 1797; May 24, 1797; June 30, 1797.

CHAPTER IX

D'ANTRAIGUES' DESPATCH-BOX

WHILE the rival parties in the two assemblies were thus preparing for the struggle, Bonaparte contrived to supply the Directory with a document which was to prove even more useful than the confession of Duverne de Presles. It will be remembered that Montgaillard had set out for Italy, at the time when Moreau and Jourdan appeared to be carrying all before them in Germany. It is not possible, however, to speak with confidence about his proceedings in that country. All that can be said for certain is that, while to the *émigrés* he gave himself out as an emissary of Louis XVIII., he, at Venice, entered into clandestine relations with Lallemand, the minister of the French Republic. But at the same time and in the same city he had more than one interview with the Royalist agent, the Comte d'Antraigues. The nature of his business with these two men may be inferred from subsequent events. Soon after his arrival at Venice, it was reported in Bonaparte's army that Pichegru had engaged in a secret correspondence with the British minister in Switzerland, who had betrayed him to the Directory. That, it was rumoured, was the reason why he had been removed from the command of the Army of the Rhine. According to Wickham, it was Montgaillard who had originated this story at the instigation of Lallemand.¹

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, March 8, 1797. *Wickham Correspondence*, I. pp. 473 and 501.

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Early in December, 1796, Montgaillard, undoubtedly, made an attempt to obtain an interview with Bonaparte at Milan. To enable him to gain access to the general, he appears to have been supplied by Lallemand with a letter of introduction. For some time past, he had been engaged in fruitless endeavours to persuade d'Antraigues to advance him money for the purpose of winning over Bonaparte to the Royal cause. But, whatever may have been his real motive for desiring to visit Milan, his project was frustrated. While still upon the territory of the Venetian Republic, he was arrested as a spy by the Austrians and conveyed to the headquarters of Alvintzy at Trente. Although he seems to have contrived to destroy Lallemand's letter, his explanations were considered so unsatisfactory that he was sent on to the Archduke Charles at Offenbourg. Here he was set at liberty, notwithstanding that his statement that he had been despatched to Italy by Louis XVIII. to negotiate with Bonaparte was not confirmed by Condé. Wickham had, at last, succeeded in convincing the prince that his agent was totally undeserving of the confidence he had hitherto reposed in him.

Montgaillard, after his release, was quickly made aware of the changed feelings with which Condé regarded him. Finding that he could not regain his former influence over him, he seems to have threatened to divulge Pichegru's secret, unless he were paid a sum of 500 *louis* which he asserted was due to him. Condé in this dilemma appealed to Wickham for help. Wickham, however, resolutely refused to make any pecuniary advances for such a purpose, and Condé, at last, reluctantly decided to purchase Montgaillard's silence at his own expense. Fauche appears to have been charged to pay him the money he demanded, and to obtain from him, in return, the various compromising documents which he possessed. After a stormy scene at the *Hotel*

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du Faucon at Neufchatel, towards the end of March, 1797, the negotiation was brought to a successful conclusion.¹ But, as the event was soon to prove, Condé had expended his money to no purpose. Although he had contrived to avert for the moment the danger that Pichegru's secret would be revealed to the Directory, it was not in his power to undo the effect of Montgaillard's intrigues at Venice.

The Comte d'Antraigues was an adventurer somewhat of the type of Montgaillard. Having been elected to the Constituent Assembly, he had been one of the first of its members to emigrate and had ever since been an active agent of Louis XVIII. It was said, however, that his services were to some extent forced upon the exiled monarch. It was his boast that he possessed certain papers of Malesherbes which established conclusively the equivocal conduct of Louis in the early days of the revolution. Be that as it may, he had, like Montgaillard, a considerable knowledge of European politics, and, like him, was the author of several pamphlets which had attracted attention. In 1793, when Spain declared war upon the French Republic, he obtained letters of naturalization from the Court of Madrid and attached himself to the Spanish legation at Venice. But, while ostensibly in the service of the King of Spain, he worked unceasingly to promote the interests of Louis XVIII. Two years later, however, the withdrawal of Spain from the coalition compelled him to shelter his proceedings under the flag of another nation, and, at the time when Montgaillard arrived at Venice, he was a member of the Russian legation in that city. He had been accompanied into exile by Madame Saint-Huberty, the most famous singer of her day, who, in 1797, was still

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, March 8, 1797. Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 80-110. G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 309-316. L. Pingaud, *Le Comte d'Antraigues*, p. 130.

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regarded as his mistress, although, in point of fact, he had married her seven years before at Lausanne.¹

During all the time he was in Italy d'Antraigues was, undoubtedly, in constant communication with Mr. Drake. Francis Drake, who, in 1794, was simply British consul at Genoa, had been appointed, in the following year, minister-plenipotentiary to the Republic of Genoa and the Court of Milan, as a reward for the valuable information which he had contrived to transmit about the state of affairs in Paris during the Reign of Terror. The name of the correspondent, whose *bulletins* he regularly forwarded to Lord Grenville, has never been discovered. Indeed, it is not very clear that it was known even to Drake himself. At one time he speaks of his informant as the secretary of the Committee of Public Safety, "who concealed his real principles under the cloak of the most extravagant Jacobinism."² At a later date, however, he describes him as "an emissary employed at Paris by the King of France" and as a person who disliked "all those of M. Mounier's description even more than the Jacobins."³

When the Directory came into existence, Drake succeeded in establishing relations, probably by the help of d'Antraigues,⁴ with a member of the Council of 500 of the name of Gamon. This individual had sat in the Convention and had voted the death of the King. But, explained Drake, in spite of his conduct on that occasion, and of the sentiments which he constantly proclaimed in public, "he had all along been an agent of the Royalist party." This description of him suggests that he may have been the mysterious author of the interesting *bulletins* forwarded during

¹ L. Pingaud, *Le Comte d'Antraigues*, pp. 82-84.

² *Fortescue Papers*, II. p. 456.

³ F. O. Genoa 12, Drake to Grenville, August 15, 1795.

⁴ L. Pingaud, *Le Comte d'Antraigues*, pp. 116-117 and 188, 189.

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the Reign of Terror. Drake, however, who was in the best position for settling that point, seems to have had no doubt that his new correspondent was a totally different person. Gamon appears to have undertaken to furnish the best intelligence in his power, provided he were assured of an asylum in England or in a British colony, should his treason at any time be brought to light. Furthermore, he asked that facilities should be granted him for transmitting to England his fortune consisting of 300,000 *francs*.¹ Drake was, apparently, empowered to comply with these demands, seeing that Gamon constantly supplied him with information for the next several months.

In September, 1796, Gamon seems to have been of opinion that the time had come when "the monarchical system might be introduced into the existing constitution," when, in short, a King might be substituted for the Directory. One of the Directors, La Revellière-Lepeau, two generals, Moreau and Pichegru, three ministers, and more than half the members of the two assemblies were, he declared, in favour of solving the question in this fashion. Louis XVIII. was, he considered, a serious obstacle to the realization of his plan, not so much on his own account as by reason of "the people around him." Gamon, however, expressed great unwillingness to be associated with Wickham, because "he was unfriendly to France and had done more harm to Lyons than even Collot-d'Herbois." Moreau, also, he asserted, regarded Wickham with aversion. Pichegru, he admitted, was not of the same way of thinking, but he was unemployed and, therefore, presumably of less consequence. But, after stating his conviction that the general situation was favourable for bringing about a change of *régime*, he explained that nothing could be effected without money.

Drake's comments upon this proposal are curious

¹ F. O. Genoa 15, Drake to Grenville, June 17, 1796.

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and instructive. Gamon, he pointed out, while a member of the Committee of Public Safety, stole about 300,000 *francs* and, "having committed one theft," it was to be feared that he would have no scruples about "committing others." He could not, therefore, "feel full of confidence in his honour." Unquestionably, however, he was "a man of eminent abilities." Having thus placed Lord Grenville upon his guard, he proceeded to explain the motives by which he conceived that Gamon was actuated. "His object," he wrote, "is to secure to himself the quiet possession and enjoyment of the fortune which he has amassed, either under a stable and orderly government in France, or, if that should not be attainable, in some foreign country the protection of which he hopes to merit by his services."¹ Without doubt, there were at this time many persons in France who, like Gamon, desired ardently to see a strong government established, under which they could enjoy in peace the wealth which they had acquired, either honestly or dishonestly, during the revolution. Lord Grenville, however, would not seem to have considered that, on this occasion, Gamon's proposals were worth entertaining, and Drake was not authorized to make him any pecuniary advances. Perhaps it was because he found that the British government would not be prevailed upon to furnish him with money that, towards the end of the year 1796, he ceased to transmit intelligence. In after years, Gamon appears to have been a strong supporter of Bonaparte, and must, therefore, have considered that a military despotism fulfilled the conditions which he regarded as necessary to his security.

In addition to his relations with disaffected persons in France, Drake, during the Italian campaign, succeeded in establishing an intercourse with several discontented officers of Bonaparte's army. A general,

¹ F. O. Genoa 15, Drake to Grenville, September 16, 179

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to whom he applies the name Boullard, Thévenin, whom he describes as a commissary-general, and Gauthier, the commandant of Tortona, appear to have been his principal correspondents. His communications with these officers were carried on through the intermediary of d'Antraigues.¹ But, if Boullard's real name were known to d'Antraigues, he would never appear to have disclosed it to Drake—a remark which applies equally to Thévenin, the supposed commissary-general. Gauthier, however, may very probably have been General Gaultier de Kervéguen² who, at this time, held a command in the Army of Italy. In his *dossier* at the Ministère de la Guerre is to be found a letter addressed to Fouché and dated 9 *thermidor an VII*, in which he is accused of displaying hostility to true patriots and of constantly befriending *émigrés* and ex-nobles.

Drake, undoubtedly, possessed a certain aptitude for work of this kind which, to judge by his despatches, afforded him the keenest enjoyment. But, successful as he was in obtaining a mass of secret intelligence, the value of the information he collected was, on the whole, surprisingly small. The *bulletins* of his anonymous correspondent, during the Reign of Terror, contain interesting descriptions of men and events in Paris, and, at the present day, may be regarded as valuable historical documents. But little beyond current gossip is to be found in Gamon's communications. It is just possible, however, that in one direction his relations with Drake may have been useful. He appears to have undertaken to improve the conditions of Sidney Smith's imprisonment in the Temple. If it were due to him that the rigour of that officer's

¹ F. O. Genoa 15, Drake to Grenville, June 23, 1796; July 3, 1796; August 3, 1796. Hill to Grenville, November 9, 1796. L. Pingaud, *Le Comte d'Antraigues*, p. 136.

² Archives administratives de la guerre. General Gaultier de Kervéguen (Paul Louis), 1737–1814. From 1793 to 1800 served in the armies of the Alps and of Italy.

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confinement was mitigated and that his escape was, in consequence, made possible, he must be admitted to have rendered an important service to the British government. In one instance only, would Drake's military correspondents seem to have furnished him with news of real value. He certainly received early information that Bonaparte proposed to seize Leghorn and thus, at a cost of only £200, he was enabled to send a timely warning to the consul and to preserve from capture twenty-five British ships and a vast amount of merchandize.¹

In May, 1797, both Drake and d'Antraigues were at Venice when the town was entered by the French troops. It had always been Bonaparte's intention to hand over to Austria a large slice of Venetian territory and, no sooner had he concluded the preliminaries of peace at Léoben, than he proceeded to pick a quarrel with the doomed Republic. As an *émigré* and the associate of Drake, a zealous agent of Mr. Pitt, d'Antraigues can have had no illusions about the danger of his position. But, although urged to fly before it should be too late, he seems to have considered that the safest course he could pursue would be to remain with the legation to which he was attached, and it was in the company of the Russian minister and the members of his staff that, on May 16, he quitted Venice. According to his own story, before departing he deposited the bulk of his papers at the Austrian legation and took away with him only three small boxes containing documents of purely literary interest.

D'Antraigues and his companions were not allowed to proceed very far upon their journey. At Trieste the whole party were detained and conveyed to the headquarters of the French division which still occupied the town. Bernadotte, when they were brought before him, announced at once that he had no intention of

¹ F. O. Genoa 15, Drake to Grenville, June 25, 1796; July 3, 1796.

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interfering with the Russian minister or with the members of his mission. But he could not admit that d'Antraigues had any diplomatic position. He was an *émigré* and, declared Bernadotte significantly, "we shall show him no more mercy than he would extend to us, were our situations to be reversed." Before d'Antraigues was led away he was allowed to take leave of his companions to whose care he confided Madame Saint-Huberty, informing them, for the first time, that she was his lawful wife. A few hours later, he set out under escort for Milan, the officer, who had charge of him, taking with him one of the three despatch-boxes which he had carried off from Venice. The contents of the other two had, it was alleged, been destroyed by Madame Saint-Huberty.

The true story of d'Antraigues' confinement at Milan will probably never be known. All that can be said with certainty about this episode in his career is that he arrived at Milan, on May 27, and was incarcerated in the citadel. Bonaparte, in the first instance, appears to have intended to send him on to Paris, but for some unknown reason he changed his mind, and, on June 1, caused him to be brought before him. Berthier alone seems to have been present at their interview and what took place can only be conjectured. It is significant that, almost immediately after this visit to Bonaparte's headquarters, the rigour of d'Antraigues' imprisonment was sensibly relaxed and that, on June 7, he was transferred to a private house, where his wife was allowed to join him and where he was kept in a kind of open arrest. Meanwhile, Bonaparte had transmitted to Paris a document purporting to be d'Antraigues' account of a conversation he had had with Montgaillard at Venice. It was nothing more nor less than a history of Pichegru's treasonable proceedings, while in command of the Army of the Rhine, and it was stated to have been

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discovered in d'Antraigues' despatch-box with a number of other papers of no importance. After remaining some weeks longer at Milan under a very mild form of arrest, d'Antraigues escaped, or more probably was allowed to escape, to Austrian territory.¹

If Bonaparte's account of this business be examined, it will be seen at once that it accords ill with the probabilities of the case. If, as he reported to the Directory, the incriminating document was found among d'Antraigues' papers, why was he treated so indulgently? The extraordinary consideration which was shown to him suggests that Bonaparte must have concluded, to his satisfaction, some kind of a bargain with his prisoner. Nor is it difficult to surmise the nature of the compact which was negotiated at their interview, on June 1. Bonaparte was perfectly aware that the Directory, which it was not yet his policy to destroy, was seriously alarmed by the state of affairs in France. Furthermore, he knew that Pichegru, whom he not improbably regarded as a dangerous rival to himself, was a leading member of the opposition party in the assembly. Undoubtedly, also, certain rumours which were current about him must have come to his ears. In these circumstances he may very well have offered d'Antraigues his life, on the condition that he should furnish him with the means of encompassing Pichegru's ruin.

In whatever manner it was obtained the document transmitted to the Directory, which is now deposited at the Archives Nationales, is, undoubtedly in d'Antraigues' writing. But there are no means of proving whether he composed it at Venice, after a conversation with Montgaillard, or whether he drew it up at Milan, at the dictation of Bonaparte. Improbable as it may sound, d'Antraigues, there can be little doubt, did carry off with him from

¹ L. Pingaud, *Le Comte d'Antraigues*, pp. 148-181.

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Venice a written account both of Montgaillard's indiscretions concerning Pichegru and of his plan for gaining over Bonaparte himself to the Royal cause. His conduct, in thus burdening himself with so compromising a document, can be explained in one way only. Clearly he must have intended to save his life by betraying Pichegru's proceedings, should his flight be intercepted and should he be captured by the Republicans. But anxious as Bonaparte may have been to injure Pichegru, he would naturally be reluctant to place in the hands of the Directory a paper in which his own name was coupled with that of the general whose reputation he wished to destroy. An unscrupulous man, in these circumstances, might be expected to eliminate those sheets containing allusions to himself and to forward only that portion of the document which incriminated his rival. The account, however, may have been composed in such a way that any suppressions could not fail to be detected. If that were the case, the assistance of d'Antraigues would necessarily have to be invoked, and, although many points connected with the affair must always remain obscure, it may be looked upon as practically certain that he saved his life and gained his liberty by agreeing to re-write certain passages of Montgaillard's "conversation," in accordance with Bonaparte's wishes.

It was not until some two months later that the Directors made use of the powerful weapon which Bonaparte had placed at their disposal. The publication of the contents of his despatch-box proved fatal to d'Antraigues' reputation. In spite of his protestations that he was an innocent victim of Bonaparte's machinations, he was henceforth regarded as a rogue and a traitor by Louis XVIII. and the Royalists. But, although he never succeeded in regaining the confidence of his sovereign, other Courts

D'ANTRAIGUES' DESPATCH-BOX

were, on occasion, prepared to make use of his sagacity and his skill as a political writer. Thugut, the Austrian Chancellor, seems to have consulted him and Cyartoryski, when he directed the foreign policy of Alexander, employed him regularly. Indeed, the Cabinet of St. Petersburg soon forgot his questionable conduct at Milan, and, in 1803, he was officially attached to the Russian legation at Dresden.¹ Three years later, the battle of Jena and the prospect of again falling into the hands of Bonaparte drove him to seek refuge in England. In London, he was for a time allowed to retain the rank and to draw the pay of a Russian councillor of legation, but his services were dispensed with, in 1807, after the conclusion of the Treaty of Tilsit. All his efforts to obtain employment from the British government appear to have been fruitless and the remaining years of his life seem to have been spent in violent quarrels with d'Avaray, Puisaye and other Royalists. On July 22, 1812, both he and his wife were murdered in their house at Barnes by their Italian servant who committed suicide, immediately after the perpetration of his crime.² The death, under these tragic circumstances, of a man, who had been in the service of several Courts and was supposed to know many secrets, gave rise to the most extravagant rumours. But it is practically certain that no government nor political party had a hand in his murder, which was the work of a discharged servant who was, doubtless, a maniac.

A brown paper parcel of moderate dimensions, marked *papers of Madame St. Elme and the Comte d'Antraigues*, may now be inspected at the Record Office in London.³ When the bundle is opened, the

¹ L. Pingaud, *Le Comte d'Antraigues*, pp. 184-185, 215-224.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 329-345.

³ F. O. ⁹⁵
636 Miscellaneous.

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first object which strikes the eye is a half sheet of note paper on which are written, in his own hand, Palmerston's instructions that "Some one is to go through these and report if there is anything interesting in them." The *memorandum* of the person who performed this task appears on the same sheet. He had discovered, he states, only copies of d'Antraigues' reports from London and Dresden and had "not met with any useful or important matter." Anybody who examines the parcel will probably concur with this description of its contents. If d'Antraigues ever possessed Malesherbes' famous papers, they are certainly not among those which may now be seen in Chancery Lane. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to know when, and in what circumstances, these documents, unimportant as they are, found their way to the Foreign Office. Palmerston's *memorandum* is dated February 21, 1837. Had they recently been brought to Downing Street, when he wrote it, or had they been impounded by the government of the day, after d'Antraigues' death, in 1812?

CHAPTER X

THE 18 FRUCTIDOR

THE election of Pichegru and Barbé-Marbois as presidents of their respective assemblies was followed by another indication of the sentiments which animated the newly returned members. Under the provisions of the constitution one of the Directors had to be replaced annually and, this year, Barthélemy, the French minister in Switzerland, was chosen to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Le Tourneur. Barthélemy was an ex-noble and a diplomatist of the old *régime* who had espoused the popular cause at the outbreak of the revolution. While at Basle, he had successfully negotiated the treaties of peace with Prussia and with Spain and, in the latter days of the Convention, had practically controlled the foreign policy of the Republic. Wickham, however, had reason to think that he was in secret sympathy with the constitutional Royalists.¹ Furthermore, having on occasions contrived to gain access to his private correspondence, he was satisfied that he was strongly in favour of bringing the war with England to a conclusion.² In these circumstances it was in complete conformity with his views that M. Barthélemy should be elected to fill the vacant post of Director, and he had, in consequence, exhorted his

¹ F. O. Switzerland 11, Wickham to Grenville, September 6, 1795.

² F. O. Switzerland 16, Wickham to Grenville, April 8, 1796.

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agents "to strain every nerve to carry that important point."¹

Wickham's parliamentary campaign had thus opened most auspiciously. At the elections the *moderates* had been uniformly successful, Pichegru had been selected by an overwhelming majority for the presidency of the Council of 500, and Barthélemy, the new Director, in the vital question of peace or war with England, was opposed to the policy which his colleagues had hitherto pursued. Nevertheless, many difficulties had still to be overcome. Without doubt, the Directory was now confronted by a hostile majority in both assemblies. But the opposition was very disunited in its views. Only a few, "scarce ten persons," reported Wickham, "were attached to the present King." The advocates of a limited monarchy were, however, more numerous. According to them, it was essential that Louis XVIII. and his brother should be passed over and that the crown should be offered to the Duc D'Angoulême, Monsieur's son. Wickham, although a decided legitimist, attached comparatively small importance to their opinions upon that point. It was their marked unfriendliness to England which rendered them objectionable in his eyes. But for reasons, which he had already explained to Lord Grenville,² he apprehended little danger from them in the immediate future and he was, consequently, prepared to support their endeavours to overthrow the Directory. The largest section of the opposition, however, consisted of men to whom he applies the name of *Independents*.³ But, had he understood the situation better, he would, doubtless, have described them as constitutional Republicans, their hostility to the Directors being due to the fact that they looked upon them as Jacobins

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, May 24, 1797.

² V. p. 181.

³ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, June 27, 1797.

and suspected them of harbouring designs involving a violation of the constitution and a return to revolutionary methods of government.

It was to Dandré, who corresponded with him under the name of Berger, that Wickham had entrusted the task of directing the different groups into which the opposition was divided.¹ It has been related in a former chapter that, early in the year 1797, he had sent him to Paris amply supplied with money, for the purpose of organizing the elections. He had every reason to be satisfied with the manner in which his agent had managed that business. Nevertheless, it was a matter for regret that he had failed to obtain a seat for himself. But, inasmuch as he was in close touch with the opposition leaders and was at pains to ingratiate himself with the new members, there were grounds for hoping that his exclusion from the assembly would not seriously impair his power of directing the various sections of the party. Moreover, he was in a position to exert his influence in other ways than by his personal relations with members. He had at his disposal the organization known as the *Institut philanthropique*, and, with Wickham's money, he was able to subsidize a newspaper, the *Memorial*, and to enlist the services of Mallet du Pan, La Harpe, Fontanes, and other distinguished writers.²

Dandré, in his first reports after the two assemblies had been constituted, made no attempt to conceal from Wickham that the situation would require to be handled very carefully. To encompass the overthrow of the Directory, he must be able to command the services of "a strong party of well-disposed persons ready to take advantage of any favourable circumstances." Unfortunately, however, the violence of the *Clichyens*, the members of the Royalist club of Clichy,

¹ V. p. 191.

² F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, May 25, 1797.

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had alarmed the constitutional Republicans, who were now disposed to come to terms with the Directorial party, on the basis of the repeal of all Jacobinical legislation and the dismissal of certain ministers of extreme views. The conclusion of such an arrangement would be fatal to their plans, and it could be prevented in one way only. An appeal must be made to the cupidity of the party which held the balance of power. But the sum which had been placed at his disposal would be insufficient for a transaction of that magnitude. He would need, he computed, £10,000 a month and, in the event of a sudden emergency, he would ask to be allowed to draw £50,000. He did not, however, propose to avail himself of any discretionary power which might be granted him in respect of the last-named sum, unless, in the opinion of both Bayard and Pichegru, the urgency of the situation should justify him in making use of it.¹

But, while advocating the adoption of this plan, Dandré seems to have been anxious that some pretence should be made of respecting the patriotic feelings of the men whose support he desired to purchase. Bayard, who by his request returned to Switzerland, was, accordingly, charged to unfold his proposals to Wickham and, in the event of his entertaining them, to suggest that the following compact should be concluded. Dandré and his friends were ready to acknowledge that the success which had hitherto attended their efforts was due to the money they had received from England. They were, in consequence, prepared to use their best endeavour to bring about a peace and to combat the prejudice against England which existed in the public mind. One stipulation only they desired to make. They must not be expected to do anything in "direct opposition" to the interests

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, May 24, 1797.

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of their country. It was very necessary, however, that they should be informed definitely whether the British government would supply them with the further money they required. Wickham appears to have been unwilling to enter into an engagement involving the disbursal of so large a sum, without referring the matter to Grenville. He, therefore, transmitted the communication he had received to London, on May 24, adding, for the guidance of his chief, that Dandré was deserving of the utmost confidence.¹

A few weeks later, however, Wickham, on his own responsibility, decided to comply with Dandré's demands in full. Rumours were current that the Directory intended to rid itself of the opposition in both assemblies by means of a *coup d'état*, and, in these circumstances, he considered it necessary to act without awaiting further instructions. It is possible that Grenville may have sent his reply in a separate despatch, or in a private letter which has not been preserved. Perhaps that may be the explanation of his apparent omission to answer his agent's request for instructions. It is clear, however, that Wickham's decision to furnish the opponents of the Directory with all the money they asked for had his complete approval. Indeed, if he had any fault to find with him, it was that he seemed to have restricted his assistance "more than we could wish." Writing to him privately, on August 5, he begged him to understand that "Berger's (Dandré's) operations were not a subject which admitted of precise instructions." It was a matter which he proposed to leave "to his discretion, on which in truth he had every reason to rely with the same confidences as we do."²

The situation which confronted the British government, in the summer of 1797, has been described in a

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, May 24, 1797.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, II. p. 44.

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former chapter. England was so exhausted by the struggle with France, so distracted by difficulties of every kind that Pitt was resolved to submit to great sacrifices in order to bring about a cessation of hostilities. The war which had tried England so terribly had, contrary to all previsions, been a source of strength to the Republic. With a return to peaceful conditions, however, the Directory would have to deal with internal problems which might conceivably prove more dangerous to its existence than a conflict with foreign Powers. Then, England having regained her strength, might be enabled to seize a favourable opportunity for restoring the balance of power which the Republic had disturbed so ruthlessly. But, for the moment, Pitt was content to see France retain all the territories in Europe which she had conquered. The question of the Low Countries, over which the negotiations had been broken off the year before, would, therefore, cease to be an obstacle to the conclusion of a settlement. Yet, in spite of these concessions, no great confidence was felt in London that they would suffice to secure the desired result. If the supposition were correct that a cessation of hostilities would inevitably involve the Directors in difficulties innumerable, was it probable that they would make peace on any terms? This was the view taken by the King, by Lord Grenville, and by other of Mr. Pitt's colleagues. So long as the Directory existed, it were useless, in their opinion, to talk of peace. To put forward proposals was simply, they argued, to court a refusal and to subject the country to a needless humiliation.¹ But, on this occasion again, Pitt's will prevailed and an intimation was sent to Paris that the British government was once more desirous of discussing the conditions of a peace. To this overture the Directory responded with some appearance of cordiality and,

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, III. p. 327.

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towards the end of June, Lord Malmesbury set out to meet the French plenipotentiaries at Lille.

Grenville's letter to Wickham, of August 5, makes it clear that, once it had been resolved to re-open the negotiations, ministers were agreed as to the course to be adopted. It is evident that they were unanimous in thinking that the more difficult the situation of the Directors in Paris the more conciliatory would be their policy at Lille. Hence, their determination to spare no expense in stimulating the activity of the opposition in the French legislature. Probably, Dandré's reports to Wickham constitute the best contemporary account of events at this period. For the information of his employer he describes his efforts to mould into one united party the different groups which were hostile to the Directory and, in the course of explaining the situation, he sheds much light upon the views and personal aspirations of the principal politicians of the time. He shows clearly that Pichegru had none of the qualities of a parliamentary leader. It is true that by reason of his election to the presidency his activities as a party man were to some extent circumscribed, although it has never been the French practice to expect from the holder of that office the attitude of impartiality which is imposed upon the Speaker of the House of Commons. But, at the end of his month of office, he was not re-elected and, henceforward, he was free to devote himself without restraint to the parliamentary struggle.

To the surprise and disappointment of his friends, however, Pichegru showed no disposition to figure conspicuously in the assembly. Intervening but rarely in the debates, he employed his time more congenially in attending the meetings of the military committee. In consequence of the part they had played in the insurrection of the 13 *vendémiaire* of the year III, the national guards had been practically disbanded.

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Nevertheless, the capital being denuded of regular troops, even they might suffice to overawe the government. Realizing this fact and having, moreover, neither confidence in, nor liking for, parliamentary orators and their methods, Pichegru set himself to work to reorganize the citizen soldiers. In view of the business upon which he purposed to employ them, he was careful to eliminate the working men and, as far as possible, to compose the battalions of shopkeepers and middle-class persons who had already displayed their willingness to strike a blow against the Directory. But, until the task of re-constituting the national guards upon these anti-democratic lines should be completed, he abstained from any overt act of hostility to the Directory. It was in vain that Dandré sought to persuade him to take the lead of the opposition in the assembly and openly declare his sentiments. He was determined, he replied, "to keep quiet and to avoid identifying himself with any party, until he should be called upon by the voice of the people to put himself at their head."¹

But, if Pichegru's reserved attitude and his manifest inability "to take the lead in a popular assembly" were disappointing, the dissensions which had broken out among the Directors themselves augured well for the success of Wickham's "operations." On the one side Barras, La Revellière-Lepeaux and Rewbell, representing the party of war and revolution, were the declared enemies of Barthélemy and Carnot, the famous "organizer of victory" in the Committee of Public Safety, who now supported the cause of the constitutional and pacific majority in the assembly. As Wickham had foreseen, the election of Barthélemy had not failed to produce a schism in the Directory. For some little time, however, it had been doubtful which side would prove the stronger. Barras, at first, was undecided

¹ F. O. Switzerland 20, Wickham to Grenville, June 27, 1797.

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and, Regicide and Terrorist as he was, is believed to have engaged in secret negotiations with the Court of Blankenburg, through the intermediary of an obscure agent who could always be disavowed.¹ At the same time, he appeared disposed openly to join with Barthélemy, Carnot and the *Moderates*. But, towards the end of June, he changed his plans and allied himself definitely with his colleagues Rewbell, La Revellière-Lepeaux and the party of war. By that time a confidential agent, whom he had despatched to Milan, had returned bringing back with him not only d'Antraigues' despatch-box, but Bonaparte's assurance that, in the event of a conflict with Pichegru and the Councils, the "patriotic" members of the Directory could depend implicitly upon the army of Italy.²

The defection of Barras appears to have taken Carnot, Barthélemy and the *Moderates* completely by surprise. Early in the session, the dismissal of certain ministers of advanced views had been successfully moved in the Councils. When the question of giving effect to this resolution came before the Directory, Carnot and Barthélemy at once declared that the will of the popular assembly must prevail and that the required changes must be made, in accordance with the views expressed by the majority of the Councils. Rewbell and La Revellière-Lepeaux, however, dissented from this opinion and Barras unexpectedly ranged himself upon their side. Ministerial changes, indeed, took place, but in making them the three Directors, the *Triumvirate* as they were henceforward to be called, took no account of the resolutions passed in the assembly and were careful only to nominate men who were prepared to carry out their own policy. Two of these new appointments call for special mention. Charles Delacroix, who, the year before, had broken off

¹ E. Daudet, *Histoire de l'Émigration*, II. pp. 89-97.

² G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, pp. 337-338.

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the negotiations with Malmesbury, was replaced at the Foreign Office by Talleyrand, and Hoche, the commander of the Army of the Sambre and Meuse, was appointed Minister of War.

Great was the indignation of the *Moderates* at Barras' desertion and at the intention, manifested by the three Directors, wholly to disregard the will of the majority in the Councils. Moreover, there was every reason to fear that these ministerial changes, Hoche's appointment more especially, were but the initial measures for compelling the legislature to adopt an attitude of complete submission to the decrees of the *Triumvirate*. Already it was rumoured that troops had approached within an unconstitutional distance of Paris. Under the pretext that they were to form part of an Irish expeditionary force, which was to assemble at Brest, detachments from the Army of the Sambre and Meuse had, it was said, violated the boundaries which it had been prescribed that no regular regiments must cross. Explanations on the subject of these military movements were angrily called for in the assembly, while in private the leaders of the moderate party met and conferred together anxiously. Carnot appears to have intimated to them that the passage of the constitutional limits by the army had been carried out without his authority and that he was, in consequence, prepared to join with them in moving the impeachment of his colleagues. But, having given them the assurance of his valuable support, he drew back at the critical moment, and thus rendered impossible of execution a plan which might have led to the overthrow of the *Triumvirate*. The three Directors, thinks M. Caudrillier, had, in the meantime, placed before him d'Antraigues' revelations and, by impressing upon him that behind the *Moderates* stood Louis XVIII. and the *émigrés*, induced him to remain inactive.¹

¹ G. Caudrillier, *Trahison de Pichegru*, p. 341.

It is evident, however, that although both sides were preparing to settle their differences by violent means neither, in July 1797, was ready to strike the first blow. Dandré and Pichegru probably reckoned that an armed attack upon the assembly would be the immediate reply of the Directors to a motion for their impeachment, and a calculation of the forces they could dispose of for resistance seems to have afforded them little cause for satisfaction. Pichegru most certainly appears to have been of opinion that it would be unwise to press matters to an issue, until the reorganization of the national guards should be nearer completion. Nor in the opposing camp would there seem to have been much confidence of success, in the event of an appeal to arms. The three Directors were under no illusions, but were perfectly aware of their extreme unpopularity with the people of Paris, and, at the last moment, they appear to have been appalled by the dangers of embarking upon the brutal violation of the constitution which they had been contemplating. Hoche's secret instructions were, therefore, cancelled and the march of the army to Paris was countermanded, it being publicly announced that the military movements, which had excited the fears of the deputies, were the result of a clerical error on the part of an official of the war department. Moreover, it was discovered that Hoche was not yet thirty years of age and was, consequently, ineligible to fill a ministerial post. Accordingly, after this brief experience of political life, that general resumed the command of his old army not a little disgusted, it may be supposed, at the undignified part he had been called upon to play.

The struggle, however, was not confined to the three Directors and their followers on the one side and to Dandré and the "well-disposed" members of the assembly on the other. The situation was complicated by the arrival of an agent of Louis XVIII. Soon after

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the arrest of Brottier and his companions, the exiled King had taken the unfortunate step of sending to Paris the Prince Louis de la Tremoille. This young man, although he had resided in England and had taken part in the wars of La Vendée, had somehow contrived that his name should be erased from the list of *émigrés*.¹ He was now charged by the exiled King to form a Royal Council of twelve persons and to enter into relations with Dandré. Both Dandré and Bayard, however, at once pointed out to Wickham that they would assuredly forfeit the confidence of their friends in the assembly, were it to be suspected that they were acting in concert with emissaries from the Court of Blankenburg. Pichegru himself was strongly of that opinion and resolutely declined to meet La Tremoille, who was busily engaged in collecting around him any *Chouans* and militant Royalists whom the prospect of disturbances had attracted to Paris.²

Pichegru, moreover, had another reason for desiring to avoid the company of this young noble. From Cochon, the ex-minister of police who had recently been removed from office, he had received a salutary word of warning. "The best agents and spies of the government," he was assured, "were among the old chiefs of the *Chouans* with whom La Tremoille was connected."³ Dandré, however, whose mission it was to act as peacemaker between the different opponents of the *Triumvirate*, could not exercise the same circumspection, although as has been shown, he had not failed to impress upon Wickham that La Tremoille's presence in Paris was greatly to be deprecated. For the general good of the cause he appears to have judged it necessary to keep up confidential relations with him and

¹ E. Daudet, *Histoire de l'Émigration*, II. pp. 84-87.

² F. O. Switzerland 20 and 21, Wickham to Grenville, May 24, 1797; June 30, 1797; September 6, 1797.

³ F. O. Switzerland 21, Wickham to Grenville, August 27, 1797.

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Barras was, in consequence, soon in possession of most of his secrets. The Prince de Carency,¹ whom Wickham had always regarded with the utmost suspicion, was one of the persons closely associated with La Tremoille.² According to Barras, and upon that point there seems no reason for doubting his veracity, this aristocratic traitor sought him out in July, for the purpose of making some highly important revelations. In this manner the Director learnt that the parliamentary campaign was paid for and inspired by Wickham and that Dandr  was his principal agent. Many other details of that nature were communicated to him, but, when he came to enumerate the persons in whom Dandr  placed the greatest confidence, Carency made one important omission. So prudently had Pichegru comported himself, so skilfully had he avoided all compromising companionships, that the traitor and, therefore, presumably La Tremoille, from whom he derived his information, knew very little about him. Overtures, he mentioned casually, had been made to Pichegru who had returned only evasive replies.³

Meanwhile, at Lille no progress had been made towards a settlement. Although Lord Malmesbury was instructed to offer no objections to the retention by France of all her conquests in Europe, his conciliatory attitude was not met in a corresponding spirit. Not content that the British government was prepared to acquiesce in an enormous extension of the frontiers of the Republic, the French plenipotentiaries, in addition to raising questions of minor importance, put forward the demand that England should give back the Cape and Ceylon to the Dutch and Trinidad to Spain. The prospects of peace would, indeed, have

¹ V. p. 185.

² E. Daudet, *Histoire de l' migration*, II, p. 20.

³ Barras, *M moires*, II. pp. 471-473. "On va traiter avec Pichegru, qui ne dit ni oui ni non."

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appeared hopeless, had it not been for a secret understanding which had been established between Malmesbury and Maret,¹ one of the French plenipotentiaries. Soon after the opening of the conference, an Englishman resident at Lille, named Cunningham, called upon Mr. Wesley,² a member of the British mission, and informed him that it was in his power to place Lord Malmesbury in communication with M. Maret, through the intermediary of a M. Pein. It was, accordingly, arranged that Mr. Ellis,³ who had accompanied Lord Malmesbury both to Paris and to Lille in the character of a "confidential friend,"⁴ should meet M. Pein and hear what he had to say. At the interview which took place, the same evening, Pein explained that Maret should be regarded as the nominee of the Director, Barthélemy, a zealous advocate of peace. It was, however, very doubtful whether the other Directors held his views on that important subject. Nevertheless, seeing that the whole nation and a majority of the representatives in the two assemblies were strongly in favour of a pacific settlement, the war party would assuredly be defeated. But the negotiations must be prudently conducted and, above all things, it was necessary to gain time. Finally, a sign of intelligence was agreed upon to enable Malmesbury and Maret to communicate with each other at the council-table, without attracting the attention of Le Tourneur and Pléville.⁵

The relations thus set up continued without interruption throughout the duration of the conferences.

¹ Hugues Maret, Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1811. Created Duc de Bassano. Died 1839.

² Henry Wesley, changed his name to Wellesley, brother of 1st Duke of Wellington, created Lord Cowley.

³ George Ellis, Author, M.P. for Seaford. Founded *Anti-Jacobin* with Canning.

⁴ *Malmesbury Diary*, III. p. 225.

⁵ *Fortescue Papers*, III. pp. 338-341. *Malmesbury Diary*, III. pp. 392-393 and 413-417.

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So much care and vigilance appears to have been exercised on both sides that no suspicion seems to have been aroused that a secret understanding existed between Maret and the British plenipotentiary. With the King's approval, even members of the Cabinet were supplied only with Malmesbury's official despatches, the reports, in which he recorded his "ex-official and much more important" proceedings, being deciphered by Canning and reserved for the eyes of Pitt and Grenville alone.¹ It is noteworthy that, about a week before the first meeting between Ellis at Pein at Lille, Wickham received secret intelligence from a "gentleman in Paris, well acquainted with M. Maret, that that negotiator had separate powers to treat with Lord Malmesbury for the Cape of Good Hope, in consideration of a sum of money."² Maret, however, would never appear to have suggested in any of his clandestine communications that peace could be obtained in that manner. Nevertheless, about August 20, an American citizen, a Mr. Melville of Boston, arrived at Lille and, having arranged an interview with Ellis, professed to be in a position to assure him that peace could be had on very favourable terms, were a payment of £450,000 to be made to Barras and Rewbell. Pein, when consulted about this offer, asserted that he, and, therefore, presumably Maret, knew nothing about the matter. But he expressed no astonishment and, declaring that both Directors were venal, gave it as his opinion that it would be well to follow up the affair.³ Malmesbury himself seems to have regarded Melville as an impostor and to have discredited his story that he had been commissioned by

¹ *Malmesbury Diary*, III. p. 430. *Fortescue Papers*, III. p. 344. Canning was Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, II. p. 43.

³ *Fortescue Papers*, III. pp. 356-358. Pein is called Henry in the correspondence.

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Barras to make any proposals to him.¹ Pitt, on the other hand, appears to have attached serious importance to this supposed mission and, at the time when negotiations were broken off, he was preparing to obtain the sum required, "in part from the territorial revenues of India and the remainder from secret service," by which means he hoped to obviate "the necessity of ever disclosing the transaction."²

Judged in the light of subsequent events, it seems probable that Melville's mission was simply a device for detaining Malmesbury at Lille. At the same time, however, it is very possible that Barras may have wished so to arrange matters that, should he find it too dangerous to resist the popular demand for peace, he could count upon receiving a substantial sum as the price of his acceptance of the British proposals. The question at issue between the *Triumvirate* and the legislature had now resolved itself into a struggle as to whether peace should be concluded with England. It was not, however, the policy of Barras and his two colleagues to break up the conference at Lille, until they should be in a position to crush the opposition of their pacific colleagues and dominate the assembly. While it is on the whole most probable that Maret was a genuine supporter of Barthélemy and Carnot and that his overtures to Malmesbury were made in the interests of peace, it is possible that he may have been playing a double game. But, whatever may have been his true motives, it is not to be denied that his secret understanding with Malmesbury proved very helpful to the plans of the *Triumvirate*, inasmuch as it induced the British plenipotentiary patiently to submit to the slow fashion in which the negotiations were conducted.

The messages sent by Maret to Malmesbury, through the channel of Pein and Ellis, were all to one effect.

¹ *Malmesbury Diary*, III. pp. 473 and 557-561.

² *Fortescue Papers*, III. p. 369.

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The question of peace or war would be decided not at Lille, but in Paris. Peace could be secured only if the two Directors and the *Moderates* should prove themselves too strong for the *Triumvirate* and the Jacobinical party in the Councils. But, as time went on, the position of Carnot, Barthélemy and their friends would improve, while that of their opponents would steadily grow weaker. Each day that passed would add to the preparedness of the national guards and intensify the dissensions which had broken out among the Directors. Matters, however, must be allowed to develop and all that would be done at Lille was to protract the negotiations.¹ But Malmesbury, who appears to have been satisfied that this advice was tendered in good faith, was not obliged to invoke pretexts for delay. The necessity of consulting its allies, the Dutch, was a reason for interrupting the proceedings constantly adduced by the French government. Indeed, one of Malmesbury's difficulties consisted in soothing the irritation of ministers at home at the slow progress of the negotiations. But, while he begged Canning to check Pitt's "too eager hope" of peace, he at the same time stated emphatically that he believed that all would eventually come right. Patience and forbearance were the qualities which were required for the moment. For his part, he could assure him that he would never allow himself "to be plagued and perplexed into finishing the business ill, for the sake of finishing it soon." On the contrary he would pledge himself "to cavil at the ninth part of a hair and to wrangle till he was hoarse for titles, dignities, treaties, ships,"² convinced as he was that in the end all difficulties would be surmounted and peace secured.

It is evident, however, that in London it caused some disappointment to those in the secret that Pichegru

¹ *Malmesbury Diary*, III. pp. 418-419 and 485-491.

² *Ibid.*, III. p. 446.

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should favour inaction and that, according to the intelligence communicated by Maret to Malmesbury, he should be seeking to effect a compromise between the Directors and the assembly.¹ This feeling is reflected in Grenville's already quoted letter to Wickham of August 5. That statesman had always combated the notion that overtures should be made to France. So strongly did he disapprove of Pitt's action in the matter that it was only from a sense of patriotism that he had consented to remain in office,² "the times and the circumstances" being so critical. In his opinion it was only serious embarrassments at home which would ever induce the Directory to make peace. Hence, it was disconcerting to learn that the persons he had confidently expected would work unceasingly to overthrow the government were now disposed to make terms with it or, at least, to adopt a waiting policy. Wickham's agents reported that the opposition leaders were agreed that nothing should be attempted, until after the next elections for a renewal of a third of the members of the Councils. Dandré was hopeful that, by means of the *Institut Philanthropique*, he would be enabled to ensure the defeat of those survivors of the Jacobin party who still retained their seats in the assembly. No danger was to be apprehended in the immediate future. Barras and his two colleagues were believed to have abandoned all idea of a *coup d'état*, and there was little probability that they would resort to violence, unless the elections of the next year should go against them. "This suits our friends," remarked Wickham approvingly.³ But Grenville, whose thoughts were concentrated upon the peace conference, would assuredly have preferred to

¹ *Malmesbury Diary*, III. p. 418.

² *Fortescue Papers*, III. p. 329.

³ F. O. Switzerland 20 and 21, Wickham to Grenville, June 30, 1797; August 18, 1797.

hear that his "friends" were preparing promptly to strike a blow the effects of which would be felt at Lille.

It was from Bonaparte that the impulse was to come which was to bring on the crisis. While ruling Italy in semi-regal state and while engaged in recasting the map of southern Europe and in arranging terms of peace with Austria, he had not been unmindful of the condition of affairs in France. He, who two years later was to destroy the Directorial *régime*, was now determined to defend it. In this summer of the year 1797, he had little doubt that, were Pichegru and his friends to gain the upper hand, the monarchy would be restored in some shape or another. And such a solution of the question would be fatal to all his hopes and plans. It has been related how, having wrung from d'Antraigues an account of Pichegru's treason, he had sent the incriminating document to Paris with the assurance that the government could depend upon the fidelity of his troops. Nor was he content thus privately to stimulate the courage of the three Directors. In a proclamation to his troops he warned them that the State was in danger and bade them be prepared to march on Paris to uphold the constitution. Inspired by him the addresses to the government which emanated from the Army of Italy, on the occasion of the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille, breathed a passionate devotion to the Republic. At the same time his trusted aide-de-camp, Lavalette, carried to Paris a sum of three million francs, the plunder of Venice or some other Italian State, and placed it in Barras' hands.¹ Furthermore, having provided him with money he proceeded to supply him with a general who could be trusted to perform

¹ *Mémoires d'un homme d'état*, IV. pp. 478-479. *Malmesbury Diary*, III. p. 516. Barras, *Mémoires*, II. p. 45. Barras states that the three millions were offered, but never actually paid.

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unflinchingly an act of illegal violence. It was not alone his courage and his brutality which marked out Augereau as a most suitable officer to carry out a *coup d'état*. Having executed his prescribed task, it was unlikely that he would aspire to play a political part, but would be content to return to his normal military duties.

The example of the Army of Italy was followed by that of the Sambre and Meuse. On August 10, on the anniversary of the capture of the Tuileries by the populace, Hoche, dying man as he was, addressed his troops in strong language and, at a dinner the same evening, he and his principal officers drank confusion to the factious and death to conspirators. Only Moreau abstained from proclaiming the ardour of his Republican affections, and from his headquarters alone the government received no encouragement to make short work of its opponents. But amidst the general clamour of the soldiers the silence which reigned at Strasburg passed almost unnoticed. The fierce Jacobinism of the armies, the arrival of Augereau in the capital and his appointment to command the military district of Paris put an end to the comparative calm which had come over the political situation. Once more the air was full of talk of an impending *coup d'état* and of the approach of the troops. At the same time it was rumoured that Pichegru had been gravely compromised by the papers of an *émigré* which had fallen into the hands of the government.

"A short note from Baptiste" (Pichegru) and a report from Dandré informed Wickham that the truce which, it had been expected, would last until the next elections, was in danger and that the "explosion" might occur very soon. His account of the situation and his plans for dealing with it are set forth in a "most secret and confidential" despatch to Grenville of August 27, 1797, and in a private letter dated the following day.¹

¹ F. O. Switzerland 21, Wickham to Grenville, August 27, 28, 1797.

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Fauche-Borel and Bayard were in Paris and the Swiss Major, Rusillion, was actually living under the same roof as Pichegru. Consequently, Wickham could always communicate with the general and learn his opinions. It was to be feared that he had been "deeply committed" owing to the seizure of d'Antraigues' papers. An article entitled *Pichegru démasqué* had appeared in the *Journal des hommes libres*, accusing him of treason at Mannheim. He, however, cared little, there being "no direct proof against him." The affair was but another instance of indiscretion and folly on the part of the Royalists, and Pichegru had used language about it which would assuredly "give much displeasure at Blankenburg." Nevertheless, these stories being afloat concerning him, he had wisely resolved not to put himself forward in the assembly. But, "as soon as the national guards should be formed," Wickham predicted that he would "play a very different part." In view of the imminence of the peril, it was to be regretted that the various opponents of the *Triumvirate* could not forget their differences and combine against the common enemy. Pichegru, however, appeared determined to have no intercourse with La Tremoille and the *Chouans*. In the meantime, Dandré had armed a number of young men who, on the day of action, would be led by officers selected by Pichegru. Of Dandré's "delicacy and honesty" Wickham could not speak too highly, "it was of a nature so new to him." Although he would have been justified by circumstances in drawing upon him for the whole amount, he had not as yet availed himself of the £50,000 which he had placed at his disposal.

Wickham's subsequent reports describe the sudden changes which came over the situation and the doubts and uncertainty which prevailed among the chief actors in the dramatic events which were impending. Writing, on September 6, he says that "all ideas of acting

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offensively against the Directory must be laid aside until after the new elections." But in a *postscriptum* to this same despatch he uses very different language. He had just received a communication from Dandré, dated September 3, apprising him that the critical moment was approaching and that he had in consequence given Baptiste (Pichegru) 1500 *louis*. All letters had been stopped in the post and he, therefore, begged him to discontinue writing to him. Again, a few days after the reception of this news from Dandré, he informed Lord Grenville that a "short note" had arrived from Pichegru, in which he lamented his inability "to diminish the dangerous security in which the leading members of the assembly are plunged." It was a state of affairs, wrote Wickham, for which Carnot and Barthélemy were chiefly responsible. Clearly events were moving rapidly to a crisis, neither letters nor papers having arrived that day from Paris. "When the explosion takes place, it will terminate in favour of the party which has the courage to make the first attack."¹

The struggle had been decided nearly a week before Wickham thus shrewdly predicted the course which events would follow. Pichegru appears to have adhered as long as possible to the course which, at the beginning of the session, he had resolved to pursue. Abstaining carefully from identifying himself with any party, he had waited for public opinion to declare itself. Although he had begun to reorganize the national guards, with the ultimate object of employing them to overthrow the Directory, he had persistently refused to participate in any public manifestation of hostility against the government. As he had declared to Dandré, he was determined not to move until called upon to act by "the voice of the people." But it was impossible

¹ F. O. Switzerland 21, Wickham to Grenville, September 6, 10, 1797.

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for him to maintain that attitude, when it was universally believed that the government possessed evidence of his treasonable correspondence with Condé and the agents of Mr. Pitt. In spite of the assurance he had given Wickham that "he cared little" for such reports, he knew well that they must prove fatal to his expectation that some day public opinion would point him out as the man to be entrusted with the task of destroying the Directory. Numerous as were the opponents of the *Triumvirate*, few of them would care to co-operate with an officer suspected of having, while in command of a French army, entered into clandestine relations with the enemies of his country. In one quarter only would conduct such as was imputed to him be approved of and extolled.

Hitherto, Pichegru had constantly refused to have any dealings with La Tremoille and the *Chouans* and the *émigrés* by whom he was surrounded. But he was compelled to turn to them, when the town was full of rumours of his strange relations with the exiled Court and when his former friends began to look at him with suspicion. While these ugly stories concerning him were being circulated on all sides, the three Directors, it was evident, were preparing to deal with their opponents in the assembly in true Jacobinical fashion. In defiance of the constitution the garrison of Paris was being strengthened by the daily arrival of detachments from the Army of the Sambre and Meuse. Nevertheless, whether because they were reluctant to co-operate with him, or whether because they had really failed to realize the true state of affairs, he found it impossible to induce Carnot and the leaders of the assembly to adopt determined measures, in order to ward off the attack which Barras and his colleagues were plainly preparing to deliver. Thus against his better judgment, in the closing days of August, he was driven to meet and confer with La Tremoille,

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Bourmont, Frotté and other *Chouan* chieftains who were at this time in Paris.

However impracticable might be their political views, his new friends were not disposed to temporize, but were strongly in favour of prompt and vigorous action. Owing to the obstacles which the Directory had placed in the way of their organization, the national guards were not yet ready to take the field. An attempt, it was true, had been made to enrol and arm the "young men," but the equipment of a respectable fighting force would involve a large expenditure, and Dandré's war chest, at this critical moment, appears to have been almost empty. Yet it is evident, from his despatch of August 27, that Wickham fully believed that his agent had at his disposal, in addition to other monies, a reserve fund of £50,000 especially intended to meet the very situation which had arisen. Was Dandré reluctant to draw upon that sum or was it not available when he desired to make use of it? There are no documents unfortunately which throw any light upon that interesting point. Gold, it must be remembered, was very scarce and the bankers employed by Wickham upon this business may have found it impossible to produce, at short notice, a large sum in hard coin. Dandré's personal honesty appears to have been above reproach. Fauche, however, talks of certain Royalist agents who had acquired fortunes, at this period, by applying to their own use money which should have been spent in the interests of the cause. Pichegru, he states, was astounded that Dandré, when applied to, could only give him 1500 *louis*. Six weeks before, when he wanted nothing, millions had been pressed upon him, but now, when money was urgently needed, he was told that it could not be procured.¹

Nevertheless, in spite of these difficulties a plan of operations was agreed to by the leaders of the party.

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 132 and 141.

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In the assembly a deputy was to move the impeachment of Barras and his two colleagues and, at the same time, Pichegru was to surround the Luxemburg, the official residence of the Directors, with *Chouans*, members of the club of Clichy and the *Jeunesse dorée* and such other well-disposed persons as could be provided with weapons. So experienced an officer can have had little expectation that a rabble of that description would be able to cope with Augereau's regular troops, and it can only be concluded that he hoped to take the *Triumvirate* by surprise. But he was woefully mistaken, if his decision to embark upon so desperate an adventure was based upon that calculation. No sooner had his measures been concerted, than they were betrayed by the Prince de Carençy to the man he hoped to catch unprepared.¹ The blow was to be struck on September 5, in two days' time. Directly that information was treacherously conveyed to him, Barras determined to act at once. Sending for Augereau he bade him take out his troops on the morrow, occupy the town, surround the assembly and make prisoners of the opposition leaders and certain other persons whose names he imparted to him. The hero of Arcola, says Barras, had never yet been called upon to carry out an operation of that kind and, as he listened to his instructions and heard the word "to-morrow," he saw that look come into his face which he had before observed upon the countenances of men for the first time under fire.²

On the morning of September 4, 1797, the 18 *fructidor* of the Year V, according to the calendar then in use in France, the alarm gun on the Pont-Neuf warned the Parisians that another of those *journées* was to take place of which in recent times they had

¹ Barras, *Mémoires*, III. p. 41. Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. p. 148.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 16.

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witnessed so many. Augereau, having steadied his nerves with copious draughts of champagne, appears to have carried out his orders relentlessly and with a characteristic brutality.¹ As a measure of precaution, presumably, Pichegru and several of his fellow deputies had spent the night at the Tuileries in the building in which their assembly held its sittings. Ever since the armies had declared against the opposition so emphatically, many of its members had thought it prudent to sleep elsewhere than in their own homes.² When the soldiers burst in upon them, Pichegru, for one moment, seems to have made some show of resistance and to have twisted in his hands a bayonet which was pointed at him.³ But after this outburst, realizing the hopelessness of his position, he surrendered quietly and was immediately conveyed with his companions to the Temple, which, ever since the King and Queen had been incarcerated there, had been used as the principal state prison of Paris. Meanwhile, notices had been posted up at every street corner announcing that these measures had been rendered necessary by the discovery of a great Royalist conspiracy. In proof of this assertion, copies of d'Antraigues' account of Montgaillard's "conversation" and the confession of Duverne de Presles were appended to the government proclamations. The publication of Pichegru's treason seems to have deprived him of all popular sympathy. But, in truth, the *coup d'état* of the 18 *fructidor* made little impression upon the public of that day. Events of that kind had occurred too often of late years. In the eyes of the people it was simply another quarrel between rival politicians, and they looked on with complete indifference while Augereau's soldiers entered the

¹ Barras, *Mémoires*, III. pp. 19-20.

² *Malmesbury Diary*, III. p. 507. "Les députés ont tellement peur depuis qu'ils voyent les armées prononcées contre eux que la plupart d'entre eux ne couchent plus chez eux."

³ Barras, *Mémoires*, III. pp. 20-21.

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hall of the assembly and dragged off to prison their lawfully elected representatives.¹

That same evening, their habitual place of meeting being still in military occupation, the Council of the 500 and that of the Ancients assembled at the Odéon theatre and at the Ecole de Medicine. The attendance was necessarily small, seeing that those members of the opposition who were not in jail were either in hiding or had taken to flight. Nevertheless, the business transacted was of the first importance. The elections of 49 departments, returning 154 representatives, were declared null and void, and 54 persons were ordered to be deported beyond the seas. Among them were the two Directors, Carnot and Barthélemy, and General Pichegru and 37 members of the two assemblies. In the case of Carnot this decree was not carried out. Realizing the impolicy of including "the organizer of victory" among the victims of his *coup d'état*, Barras had taken steps to enable him to escape to Germany.² Wickham's agents Dandré, Bayard, Fauche and Rusillion, although their flight was, presumably, not connived at by any one in authority, also, contrived, after various adventures, to reach Swiss territory. Meanwhile, Pichegru, Barthélemy, Willot and the most prominent of the persons sentenced to banishment had been conveyed to Rochefort, in especially constructed carriages resembling cages, and embarked for Cayenne. Capital punishment for political offences had been so greatly abused that it was now very much out of favour. But it had been discovered that the same result could in most cases be attained, almost as expeditiously, by means of the "dry guillotine," as transportation to the fever-stricken wastes of French Guiana was called.

¹ Hyde de Neuville, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 187-193. *Malmesbury Diary*, III. p. 513.

² Barras, *Mémoires*, III. p. 33.

CHAPTER XI

THE SECOND COALITION

THE effect of the *coup d'état* was immediately felt at Lille. Twelve days after Barras' victory over his opponents in the two Councils, Malmesbury was ordered to leave France. The Directory, to which Merlin of Douai and François de Neufchâteau had been elected, in replacement of Carnot and Barthélemy, then proceeded to deal with Wickham. The note, which its agent, the citizen Mengaud, was charged to deliver to the Helvetic Body, peremptorily insisted upon that gentleman's immediate departure, on the grounds that his mission had no other object than the encouragement of plots against the internal and external security of the French Republic, and had "no reference whatever to the respective interests of England and Switzerland." It being clear that military measures would be employed to enforce this demand, Wickham, without awaiting either the decision of the Helvetic Body or instructions from home, at once announced his intention of paying a visit to Colonel Craufurd, who still lay sick at Frankfort, and quitted Switzerland. The Directory, he explained to Lord Grenville, was, undoubtedly, meditating an armed intervention in Switzerland and he was most anxious that it should not be made to appear that it was owing to His Majesty's minister that that calamity had befallen the country. His conduct, in thus doing all in his power to avoid furnishing the French Republic with a pretext for inflicting "injury and outrage upon a peaceful and happy

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nation," was cordially approved of by his government, which decided that it would be more dignified completely to withdraw his mission. He was, consequently, desired to return to England with the staff of his legation, after "taking such measures as might be proper for keeping up his channels of intercourse with those persons in France with whom he might still be enabled to maintain a correspondence."¹

On October 7, 1797, when the French note was delivered to the Swiss authorities, Wickham was aware that the Directory had acquired possession of certain papers which showed conclusively the kind of business upon which he had been engaged during the past three years. The circumstances in which these documents had passed into the hands of the Directory were very peculiar. One of Barras' first acts, after Pichegru's plans had been betrayed to him and after he had had his interview with Augereau, was to summon Moreau to Paris. It has been related that, when the soldiers were sending addresses to the central government, the Army of the Rhine had maintained a silence contrasting strangely with the noisy ardour with which Hoche's and Bonaparte's troops had protested their devotion to the Republic. Moreau's political sentiments appeared, therefore, somewhat doubtful, and it had been considered advisable to call him to Paris, in order that he might be kept under observation until the crisis should be past. But, two or three days after the *coup d'état* had been carried out and before he had had time himself to reach Paris, a letter from him arrived addressed to Barthélemy, the imprisoned Director. In it he announced that, during the brief campaign in the spring, his cavalry had captured General Klinglin's baggage which, on examination, had been found to contain a number of documents of a highly compromising character, relating to a correspondence which

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, II. pp. 44-64.

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Pichegru had clearly been carrying on with the enemy. In effect, almost all Demougé's reports, many of which have been quoted in the course of this narrative, had thus fallen into Moreau's hands. When in due course these papers arrived in Paris, orders were at once transmitted to Strasburg for the arrest of Badonville, Lajolais and his wife, and several other persons. But, although no steps of that kind were taken against him, Moreau's own conduct, it was clear, was open to very grave suspicion.

To decipher the whole of Klinglin's correspondence necessarily required time, but the most cursory examination of it must have revealed the fact that Pichegru had been engaged in some very extraordinary transactions. Nevertheless, Moreau, although he had secured these documents on April 21, had maintained an absolute silence about them until September 5, the 19 *fructidor*, and, even then, his report upon them was addressed, not to the Minister of War, but to Barthélemy, who had no concern with military affairs. Furthermore, his letter to the proscribed Director, which was not dispatched from Strasburg until the 19 *fructidor*, was, either by accident or by design, falsely dated the 17.

It seems probable that Moreau must have been aware that Pichegru intended to make an attempt to overthrow the Directory, and that, in consequence, he considered it politic to screen him, so long as there might appear to be a prospect that he would contrive to achieve his purpose. If the news were conveyed to Strasburg by the aerial telegraph, he may have known the same evening that the trial of strength had taken place and that the Directorial party had gained the victory. If that were the case, it would explain why, having remained silent for so many months, he suddenly, on the 19 *fructidor*, decided to expose Pichegru in his letter to Barthélemy. It would seem,

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also, that he must have resorted to the very clumsy device of affixing a false date to his letter, in order to make it appear that it had been written on the day preceding the *coup d'état*. But, if Fauche's¹ account be true of a conversation which he had with him in Paris some years later, Moreau had another reason for breaking the long silence which he had observed about the Klinglin papers. After the conclusion of the armistice, in the spring of 1797, Desaix, who had assisted to decipher the correspondence, was sent upon some mission to Italy, and at Milan was informed by Bonaparte himself that a document, obtained from d'Antraigues, proving Pichegru's treason, was on its way to Paris. Having learnt this piece of news, he made haste to communicate it to Moreau, pointing out that, inasmuch as Pichegru's proceedings were known to the Directors, he must needlessly expose himself to suspicion, should he continue to keep secret the existence of the papers captured at Offenbourg.

The reasons officially adduced by Moreau in explanation of his conduct are singularly unconvincing. Being of opinion that the Klinglin papers constituted a moral, but not a legal, proof of Pichegru's guilt, he had decided that the whole affair might, without danger, be consigned to oblivion, seeing that peace was about to be concluded. It was only when he saw Pichegru enjoying the public confidence and at the head of a political party that he had felt constrained to speak out. He was aware that Pichegru was generally looked upon as his friend, but, in truth, he had long since ceased to esteem him. Furthermore, in an army order, on the eve of his departure for Paris, he informed the troops that it was unfortunately too true that their late commander had betrayed the trust which his country had reposed in him.² It

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, III. pp. 14-17.

² *Procès de Georges, Pichegru*, etc. Acte d'accusation.

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may be assumed that the Directors were not greatly impressed by his excuses nor by the indignation with which, at this late hour, he denounced Pichegru's proceedings. But, as they contented themselves with depriving him of his command, while allowing him to retain the full pay of his rank, it must be supposed that they were afraid to deal severely with a highly popular general officer.

Encouraged by the precarious situation of the Directory in the summer, Austria had been making difficulties about signing the peace, the preliminaries of which she had agreed to, in April, at Léoben. But the *coup d'état* of *fructidor* and Bonaparte's high language put an end to her hesitations and, on October 17, 1797, the definitive treaty was concluded at Campo Formio. Thus was dissolved the coalition, and Republican France found herself, for the first time, at peace with continental Europe. It was soon evident, however, that her five rulers were determined to find employment for the armies which they were unable to pay, but which they were afraid to disband. Switzerland was a country in which the Directors had always been anxious to secure a foothold, because of its strategical importance and because, having hitherto escaped the devastation of war, it offered a good field for plunder. Wickham's departure had removed one pretext for intervention, but another was quickly found. An ultra-Liberal or French party existed in several of the cantons and it was now resolved to render it practical assistance. An agitation having been fomented in the Pays de Vaud against the mild rule of the Bernese oligarchy, a French army, early in 1798, crossed the frontier in aid of the democratic party. On March 5, General Brune occupied Berne and the Swiss Confederation was dissolved. In its place was set up the Helvetic Republic, the constitution of which was modelled upon that existing in

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France. But any satisfaction which the Swiss democrats may have derived from seeing their institutions thus drastically reformed by a foreign Power was dispelled, as soon as they realized that it was a boon for which they were expected to pay generously. When the French commissioner, bearing the significant name of Ratinat, began to levy contributions, a rebellion broke out which Brune promptly and relentlessly suppressed. Before the end of the year 1798, Switzerland had ceased to be an independent State, Geneva had been formally incorporated into the French Republic, and 23,000,000 Swiss *francs* had been paid into the Directorial exchequer.

While Brune was thus plundering and revolutionizing Switzerland, Berthier, the future chief of the Imperial Staff, was acting in similar fashion at Rome. The democratic party having been instigated to create disturbances, in the course of which the French general, Duphot, was killed, the ambassador, Joseph Bonaparte, left Rome, and Berthier, on February 15, 1798, occupied the Castle of St. Angelo. Thereupon, the Roman Republic was proclaimed and the Pope expelled. But, when they saw the finest treasures of the Vatican removed to Paris and when they had to comply with the extortionate demands of the French commissioner, the Roman, like the Swiss, democrats began to think that Liberal institutions, obtained by the help of the Directory, were scarcely worth the price which they had to pay for them.

Although Malmesbury's mission had failed in its object, Pitt had no cause to regret having sent him to Lille. The manner in which his conciliatory proposals had been repulsed showed clearly that the Directory was irrevocably determined to continue the war. In England the spirit of the nation rose, when it was realized that the struggle must be fought out to the bitter end and that no terms, however reasonable,

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would avail to secure peace. Following closely upon the rupture of the negotiations, Duncan's victory at Camperdown did much to restore the public confidence, which had been so dangerously shaken by the mutinies in the fleet. Nevertheless, the first half of the year 1798 was a period of intense anxiety. Although Duncan's successful action had removed the fear that England would, in the immediate future, be invaded from Holland, a formidable expedition was known to be fitting out at Toulon, and Ireland, it was believed, was its destination. Meanwhile, proposals for a renewal of the coalition were addressed to all the great Courts, the efforts of British diplomacy to reconstitute the alliance being materially assisted by the alarm and indignation which the conduct of the Directory at Rome and in Switzerland aroused. It was mainly for the purpose of propitiating the Court of Vienna that Pitt arrived at a decision which was to have far-reaching consequences. In the spring of 1798, Nelson was ordered to re-enter the Mediterranean and afford protection to Naples which was gravely menaced by the French occupation of Rome. The reappearance of the British flag in those waters coincided with the departure from Toulon of the expedition which had caused so much alarm in England. Contriving to elude the British fleet, Bonaparte, capturing Malta on the way, landed his troops in safety in Egypt. But Nelson, although baffled for the moment, was soon in hot pursuit and, on August 13, 1798, after routing the Mamelukes and occupying Cairo, Bonaparte learnt that he was cut off from Europe. Thirteen days earlier, the French fleet had been annihilated at the battle of the Nile. Such was in brief the situation when, towards the close of September, 1798, Pichegru and several of his deported companions arrived at Sheerness on board a British frigate, having contrived to escape from Sinnamary, the village in French Guiana

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which had been assigned to them as a place of residence.

The year before, as soon as it was known that the proscribed deputies were to be deported, Windham had proposed, in consideration of "the merits and value of Pichegru," that an attempt should be made to intercept the ship which was to carry him into exile. The capture of a French vessel and "the turning loose into Europe of such an enemy of the French government"¹ were objects, he pointed out, well worth pursuing. This was a sentiment with which all his colleagues could heartily agree, but the promptitude with which the principal victims of the 18 *fructidor* were removed to their destination rendered any plan of rescuing them impossible of execution, and it was due to their own unaided efforts that, after several of their companions had succumbed to the unhealthiness of the climate, Pichegru, Willot, Barthélemy, and some four others had managed to reach Demerara.² The fugitives, as may be supposed, were cordially welcomed by the British government and it devolved upon Mr. Wickham to suggest the most effectual manner in which they could be "turned loose into Europe."

On returning to England, Wickham had at once taken up the duties of an Under Secretary of State at the Home Office, a post which had been kept open for him during the whole period of his absence in Switzerland. In that capacity he had been occupied mainly with Irish affairs which, at that time, were included among the business with which the Home Office was concerned. As may be seen by his correspondence with Castlereagh, the secret service was his especial province. But, while engaged in surrounding the

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, III. p. 374.

² Hyde de Neuville, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 204-217. De la Rue, Hyde's brother-in-law, escaped with Pichegru and his account of their adventures is probably the most veracious which can be consulted.

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United Irishmen with spies and informers, he was careful to maintain his relations with the French Royalists. It will be remembered that, before leaving Switzerland, he had been directed to take measures for keeping up his "channels of intercourse" with France. He had, accordingly, arranged that Mr. Talbot, the secretary of his legation, who was conversant with his methods of procuring information and was well acquainted with his principal agents, should remain behind in Germany. Talbot had accompanied Malmesbury on his peace mission to Paris, at the end of 1796, and, at the beginning of the following year, had been attached to the legation at Berne, when Charles Flint was recalled to London and appointed Superintendent of Aliens. His task of "keeping up the intercourse," which Wickham had established with the interior of France, appears to have been officially described as a "secret mission of observation upon the affairs of Switzerland at Ulm and Stockach and other parts of Swabia and upon the confines of Switzerland." To some of his proceedings, while endeavouring to carry out what he chose to consider the intentions of his government, it will soon be necessary to refer.

Wickham still adhered to the opinion, which he had formed in Switzerland, that it rested with the middle classes to decide whether the monarchy should be restored, or the republic be maintained, in France. Consequently, he regarded it as most important that Pichegru, while in England, should do nothing to offend or to shock their susceptibilities. Were it to be known that he was in London associating with militant royalists and in the employment of the Bourbon princes, his power of influencing the *Moderates* would be gone for ever. Pichegru himself seems to have been of the same opinion and to have been very desirous of avoiding public attention.¹ It was,

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, II. pp. 75-78.

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however, impossible entirely to conceal the fact that he and some of his fellow exiles were in England. "The French deputies escaped from Cayenne," announced *The Times*, on September 27, "are all lodged in the Parliament St. Coffee House, except General Pichegru who is at the hotel in the Adelphi." He seems to have been in need of rest and to have been suffering from the effects of the climate of South America and of the hardships he had undergone.¹ Without doubt, however, he frequently visited the Home Office and conferred with Wickham. An entry in Windham's diary, under the date of October 24, 1798,² shows that, on that day, he had an interview with him. No plans for the future seem to have been considered and Windham appears to have been anxious only to ascertain his views about the changes which had taken place in France. It was on that occasion that he gave vent to those sentiments, regarding the republican type of government, which have already been quoted.³ The early days of the revolution, the policy of the Directory and the personal character of its members were all in turn discussed. The first object of the Directors, their tenure of power being short, was, he declared, to enrich themselves quickly. Windham, having sought to explain to him "the beauties" of the British constitution, he entered upon the subject eagerly and seems to have displayed some knowledge of the matter. The doctrine that ministers alone were responsible and that the King could do no wrong he pronounced to be admirable. An hereditary, but limited, monarchy was, he considered, the only suitable form of government for France. He appears to have been ready to talk freely about his campaigns and to have expressed himself with some cynicism about the motives

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. p. 211.

² B. M. Add. 37,865, *Windham Papers*, Vol. XXIV.

³ V. p. 20.

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which induced men to submit to the discomforts and perils of war. "I asked him," records Windham, "whether it was political enthusiasm that reconciled the soldiers to the hardships and dangers of a service into which they had been forced? He said, no, but *les délices de coquiner*, which I took to mean the love of idleness and the pleasure of living independent of honest labour."

On November 1, *The Times* informed its readers that "General Pichegru had embarked on board the *Tigre*, commanded by Sir Sidney Smith, on his voyage to Morocco." The news was altogether incorrect. Pichegru, at this time, was living at Epsom, under the name of Captain Pictet, and, in the strictest *incognito*, was present at the opening of Parliament, on November 20. The King, relates Fauche,¹ was aware that he was among the spectators and, having caused him to be pointed out to him, observed him, through his glasses with the keenest interest. Some six weeks earlier, the Lord Chancellor, Loughborough, in conveying to Wickham the Royal approval of the manner in which he had managed the business of the escaped French deputies, mentioned that "His Majesty was particularly pleased with the discretion and temper of General Pichegru, who has gained a distinguished place in his esteem." Nevertheless, his stay in England was not of long duration. Early in December, travelling under the name of Major Peron, he embarked at Sheerness and proceeded to Hamburg.²

Pichegru's visit to Hamburg seems to have been connected with the affair which had brought Fauche to England. Having been sent to Paris by Wickham,

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 211-212.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, II. pp. 80-81. The date, October 4, on Pichegru's letter to Wickham from Sheerness is clearly an error. It should be probably December 4.

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in August, 1797, Fauche, after the *coup d'état* of the 18 *fructidor*, had seen himself denounced by name, as the agent who had carried on the correspondence between Pichegru and Condé. The hospitality of a certain David Monnier, a bookseller like himself, who, at great personal risk, took him into his house, enabled him to elude the vigilance of the police. His host appears to have numbered among his intimate friends, the citizen Bottot, the confidential secretary of no less person than the Director, Barras. According to Fauche's story, after a very brief acquaintance with this man, he disclosed to him that he was a Royalist agent for whom the police were searching high and low. Bottot, thereupon, assured him that he had reason to think that Barras himself would be found by no means unwilling to serve the cause of the monarchy, and, in proof of the Director's good intentions, he received, two or three days later, a passport by the aid of which, on September 13, 1797, he safely crossed the frontier into Switzerland.¹ No sooner was he out of danger than, acting upon the suggestion which had been made to him, he set himself to elaborate a plan for gaining over Barras. Before parting from David Monnier, he had arranged that he should be the channel of his further communications with the Director's secretary and had handed over to him bills to the amount of 300 *louis* to cover his expenses. Thus was initiated a correspondence which was maintained uninterruptedly for a period of about two years. Whether Monnier was, as he pretended he was, secretly employed by Barras, and whether he had any authority for holding the language, which he, undoubtedly, did use, can never be known.

M. Ernest Daudet,² who has made a close study of the question, is strongly of opinion that the whole

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 149-158.

² E. Daudet, *Histoire de l'Émigration*, II. pp. 241-255, and 317.

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affair was nothing more than an attempt, on the part of a necessitous and unscrupulous person, to extract money from the too credulous Fauche. Certain it is that when, in the summer of 1798, Fauche came over to London to impart to ministers the fact that he was in secret communication with Barras, Grenville and Wickham attached little importance to his story and Pichegru, who was better qualified than either of them to judge of Barras' dispositions, seems to have been equally incredulous. But, as it was possible that they might all be mistaken, it was decided that he should go to Hamburg, whither Fauche had preceded him, in order to meet Monnier in person and cross-question him closely.¹

In the early days of the revolution, many Royalists had taken up their abode at Hamburg and their numbers had recently been increased by the arrival of numerous *émigrés* who had been compelled to fly from Switzerland. But the French Royalists were not the only political exiles who hoped to find a safe refuge within the confines of the free city. Shortly before Pichegru's arrival at Cuxhaven, the magistrates of Hamburg, at the instance of the British minister, Sir James Craufurd, the elder brother of the soldiers, Charles and Robert, had arrested the *United Irishmen*, Napper Tandy, and several of his companions. When taking leave of him, Wickham had not concealed from Pichegru that it was the intention of his government to endeavour to procure the extradition of the "Irish traitors." Should that demand be complied with, it was to be feared that the Directors would insist that those of their particular enemies, who were domiciled within the town, should be given up to them.² Pichegru, for

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, II. pp. 81-84. Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 212-213.

² *Ibid.*, II, p. 84. Napper Tandy was in effect given up some months later.

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that reason, presumably, sought and obtained the permission of the Duke of Brunswick to reside at Zelle. Nevertheless, he appears on several occasions to have gone to Hamburg and to have conferred with Monnier. As a result of his interviews with that person, he seems to have modified his first opinion and to have inclined to the belief that Barras might be really desirous of making his peace with the Bourbons.¹ Indeed, at one time, he seems to have taken an active part in the negotiations. Writing to his brother, on March 6, 1799, Thomas Grenville alludes to his presence at Berlin, mentioning that he is there *incognito* in connection with the correspondence which Fauche was carrying on with Paris.² But at that time it was evident that the continental peace was at an end.

On December 28, 1798, an Anglo-Russian treaty had been concluded, and, in the early months of the following year, Suvorow began his march to Italy through the territories of the German Empire. Thereupon, on March 1, 1798, the French crossed the Rhine, an act to which the Court of Vienna responded with a formal declaration of war.

The allies opened the campaign in brilliant fashion. The French armies, disposed upon a line which extended from Naples to the North Sea, met everywhere with defeat. The victory of the Archduke Charles at Stockach, on March 25, 1799, brought Jourdan's invasion of Germany to an abrupt termination. Further to the South, Massena was compelled to abandon Zurich and was driven to the confines of Switzerland. In Italy the successes of Melas and Suvorow were still more decisive. By the end of June, the French had been forced back as far as Genoa, while the Cisalpine, the Roman, and the

¹ E. Daudet, *Histoire de l'Émigration*, II. p. 286.

² *Fortescue Papers*, IV. p. 489.

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Parthenopæan Republics—the edifice created by Bonaparte and his successors—had collapsed like a pack of cards.

In London it was determined that a great effort must be made to finish the work which had begun so auspiciously. An agreement had already been concluded at St. Petersburg, whereby a subsidized Russian army of 45,000 men was to proceed to Switzerland to co-operate with the Archduke. Holland and Belgium being seemingly ripe for a counter-revolution, it was resolved to send thither an Anglo-Russian expeditionary force to assist the people to throw off the French yoke. Meanwhile, early in June, Wickham was despatched upon a second mission to Switzerland, while Talbot was recalled and Robert Craufurd was sent out to replace him. The renewal of the war, Talbot was informed, and the necessity of appointing a military man made it "superfluous to assign any other reason"¹ for his supersession. In point of fact, however, he had incurred the serious displeasure of Lord Grenville and would, doubtless, have been recalled, even had the continental war not broken out afresh.

It will be remembered that, when the British legation was withdrawn from Switzerland, Talbot had been left behind in Germany on "a secret mission of observation." With regard to the interior of France he was charged to keep up the intercourse which Wickham had established. But, while he was expected to lose no opportunity of acquiring intelligence about the plans of the Directory, he was warned to avoid spending money in fomenting local insurrections.² The Cabinet of London had now adopted the view that the French Republic could not be overturned by movements of that kind. Only, when the

¹ F. O. Switzerland 23, Grenville to Talbot, March 15, 1799.

² *Ibid.*, 22, Grenville to Talbot, February 14, 1798.

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coalition should be formed and when the armies of invasion should be in a position to enter France, were the Royalists to be furnished with the means of rising in arms. To judge by Talbot's reports, many of which are signed in the name of "J. Tindal," he would appear to have been deficient in the cool judgment required for the mission which had been entrusted to him. For the first few months, he seems to have adhered to the spirit of his instructions and to have carried on his relations with the Royalist agents in Swabia and in the interior of France in the manner prescribed by Lord Grenville. But, in the spring of 1798, after a conference at Stockach with some of the victims of the 18 *fructidor*, at which the plan of "striking a blow at Paris" was communicated to him, he began to adopt a more independent line of conduct. Having learnt the nature of their schemes, he agreed to furnish the conspirators with money, feeling sure, as he explained to his chief, that "every shock of what nature soever must serve to convince the nation of the instability of the present order of things."¹

His conduct having escaped rebuke, Talbot appears to have been emboldened to embark upon more ambitious schemes. Unmindful of the fact that he was charged to do no more than to prepare the elements of insurrection, he not only entered enthusiastically into a plot for exterminating the Directors, but proceeded to supply the conspirators with the means of immediately carrying out their project. The *coup d'état* of *fructidor*, he wrote on November 25, 1798, had been successful only because the *Moderates* had no adequate armed force at their disposal. But that deficiency had been remedied and a "select band of intrepid men" was now at the service of the party. At Augsburg, he had recently

¹ F. O. Switzerland 22, Talbot to Grenville, May 3, 1798.

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conferred with a Royalist emissary from Paris, who had assured him that the Directorial *régime* was utterly discredited and that "the moment was favourable for restoring the ancient order of things." It had, consequently, been resolved to take full advantage of the situation and a plan of action had been drawn up. On the appointed night, "the band of intrepid men" would invade the Luxemburg and, "should they succeed in making away with the Directory, the *tocsin* would be sounded, the *sections* would assemble, and the King would be proclaimed." Talbot was so convinced of the practicability of this scheme that he consented to place £25,000 at the immediate disposal of his visitor.¹ Strange to relate, the person who thus advocated the assassination of the Directors as a preliminary to the restoration of the monarchy was Royer-Collard, the future *Doctrinaire*, one of the most respected and dignified members of the legislative assemblies of the Restoration and of the Monarchy of July.²

Lord Grenville lost no time in expressing his strong disapproval of the support which his agent had extended to an enterprise of so questionable a character. A plan, he wrote on January 25, 1799, involving "a personal attempt against the lives of the persons composing the Directory must be altogether and immediately rejected." Talbot was, therefore, "entirely and distinctly to put an end to the negotiation." No authority had ever been given him to dispose of so large a sum, and it was only that injury might not be done to the credit of His Majesty's government that his drafts would be honoured. For the future, concluded Grenville, "he was to have as little to do as possible with the immediate agents of

¹ F. O. Switzerland 22, Talbot to Canning, November 3, 1798; November 25, 1798.

² *Ibid.*

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the French King.”¹ A few weeks later, as has already been related, he was recalled and Lieut.-Colonel Robert Craufurd was selected to succeed him.

The chief business devolving upon Craufurd was the raising of the 20,000 Swiss troops which the British government was prepared to maintain for service against “the common enemy.” The Swiss were somewhat reluctant to serve beyond their own frontiers, and the contingent, in consequence, would never appear to have reached its full strength. Moreover, Craufurd’s fiery and ungovernable temper involved him in constant quarrels both with the Swiss and the Austrian officers. Nor were his relations with Wickham as amicable as those which had always subsisted between that gentleman and his brother, Charles.² Before long, however, he was called away to serve upon the staff of the Duke of York in Holland and the work of constituting the legion was continued by Colonel Ramsay. It was the intention of the British government to assign to the Swiss corps a prominent part in the operations of the autumn. By that time, according to the plan concerted with the Cabinets of Vienna and St. Petersburg, Suvorow would have crossed the Alps and, having joined hands with Korsakoff and the Archduke, would have expelled Massena from Switzerland. Eastern France would thus be laid open to invasion and it was hoped that, before winter should put an end to active operations, the allies, including the Swiss legion, under the Comte d’Artois, would be able to establish themselves at Lyons.³

But the idea of allowing the Comte d’Artois to participate in the projected invasion was no sooner

¹ F. O. Switzerland 23, Grenville to Talbot, January 25, 1799.

² *Fortescue Papers*, V. pp. 322-323, 366-367.

³ F. O. Army in Germany 24, Grenville to Wickham, July 30, 1799. *Fortescue Papers*, V. 251-258.

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formed than it had to be relinquished. When he was on the point of starting from London for the continent, the Tsar Paul, who seems to have entertained a personal dislike to him, protested against his employment. It being impossible to risk offending the autocrat, Lord Grenville was obliged regretfully to inform Monsieur that circumstances had arisen which made it necessary that he should postpone his departure.¹ At an earlier date, the question of conferring upon Pichegru the command of the Swiss legion had been under consideration. The Archduke Charles, who had been in correspondence with him ever since the opening of the campaign, appears to have been in favour of employing him in that capacity. Neither Wickham nor Grenville, however, was altogether of that opinion.² Being firmly convinced that only by a restoration of the Bourbon monarchy could a stable form of government be set up in France, they appear to have regarded it as essential that a Bourbon prince should be present with the armies of invasion. But, if Wickham were disposed to doubt the expediency of allowing Pichegru to command the Swiss, he was delighted to hear, early in August, 1799, that he was expected shortly to arrive at the Archduke's headquarters at Zurich.³ With a view to the advance of the armies in the autumn, he was already engaged in establishing a correspondence with Lyons and in posting his spies and emissaries at divers points along the frontier. In all such matters the advice and local knowledge of Pichegru could not fail to be of the greatest assistance.

Thus, in August, 1799, the triumph of the coalition seemed almost assured and the destruction of the Republic all but an accomplished fact. The defeat of

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, V. p. 291.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, II. p. 141. *Fortescue Papers*, V. pp. 291 and 350.

³ *Fortescue Papers*, V. p. 219.

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its armies appeared to have sealed the fate of the Directory which had deliberately used war as a means of government. By illegal interference with the elections, by repetitions on a smaller scale of the *coup d'état* of *fructidor* and by unconstitutional measures of all kinds, Barras and his colleagues had, hitherto, contrived to exist, but no one believed that they could survive much longer. To foreign observers generally and, without doubt, to the majority of Frenchmen, a restoration of the monarchy of the Bourbons seemed the only alternative. But Talleyrand and Siéyès and a small circle of clever men took a different view of the situation. They saw that the Directory was terribly unpopular and that the demand for peace was universal. At the same time, however, they perceived, no less clearly, that the nation had irrevocably adopted the principles of the revolution and that no attempt to restore the old *régime* could prove successful. The many who had benefited by the revolution might feel insecure under the Directory, but how infinitely worse would be their position under the Bourbons, when the priest and the *émigré* would lay claim to their estates. Talleyrand and his party were, therefore, disposed to agree with the majority of their countrymen that the Directory must be swept away, but in its place they resolved to set up a new government, founded upon a strictly revolutionary basis, yet strong enough to afford to the *nouveau riche* the protection for which he craved.

In May, 1799, the Abbé Siéyès, who for the past two years had represented the Republic at the Court of Berlin, was elected a Director in succession to Rewbell, who retired by rotation. It may be looked upon as certain that he entered the Directory with the express purpose of destroying it. But it is doubtful whether he intended to set up some kind of a dictatorship, or whether he proposed to create a statutory monarchy in the person of the Duc d'Orleans or of a Prussian

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prince. Without doubt, nothing was further from his thoughts than the establishment of a military despotism. Nevertheless, he and his friends were compelled to seek the assistance of a soldier, seeing that no constitutional changes could be carried out, unless the army could be induced to regard them with approval. Bonaparte was in Syria, cut off from France by the British fleet, and Hoche had died of consumption, a few days after the *coup d'état* of *fructidor*. Moreau, it will be remembered, had incurred the suspicion of the Directors by withholding from their knowledge the evidence of Pichegru's treason which he had discovered in the Klinglin papers. But, when the war broke out afresh they had again employed him and, in this summer of 1799, he held the chief command in Italy. When sounded by Siéyès' emissaries, he seems to have declined to engage personally in the work of overthrowing the Directory, on the plea that he had no experience of politics. It would appear, however, that he suggested that General Joubert might not improbably be found willing to undertake the business.

Other persons besides Moreau seem to have drawn Siéyès' attention to the brilliant Joubert, the most promising of Bonaparte's lieutenants. Talleyrand's friend, the heretofore Marquis de Sémonville, whose foresight in such matters was soon to become proverbial, had already noted the young general as a rising man. Indeed, so desirous was he of attaching himself to Joubert's fortunes that he had contrived that he should marry his step-daughter, Mlle. de Montholon. But to qualify for the part it was proposed he should play, he must achieve some feat of arms which should strike the popular imagination. It was determined, accordingly, that he must be sent to Italy to try conclusions with the redoubtable Suvorow. Moreau allowed himself to be superseded without demur and cheerfully undertook to serve as the young general's second-in-command.

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Joubert's honeymoon was as short as Bonaparte's, on a similar occasion, three years before. Like Bonaparte, no sooner had he reached his headquarters than he made up his mind to strike hard and promptly. His army had been substantially reinforced and must, he reckoned, outnumber any force which Suvorow could muster. But, unknown to him, Mantua had fallen and the Austrian troops investing it were already hastening westwards by forced marches. On the evening of August 14, 1799, the French 40,000 strong were face to face with Suvorow and Melas who could dispose of 60,000 men. Soon after dawn, the following day, while his advanced troops were driving in the Russo-Austrian outposts, Joubert received his death wound. The battle raged with more than usual fierceness until nightfall, when Moreau withdrew from the stricken field the shattered remnants of the French army. The chances of war had upset a well-laid scheme. Sémonville had lost his brilliant son-in-law and Siéyès the instrument with which he intended to destroy the Directory.

The battle of Novi marks the highest point to which the fortunes of the coalition were destined to rise. Henceforward, the divergent aims of the allied Powers were to render abortive their military action against the Republic. It would be beyond the scope of this narrative to do more than to point out briefly some of the reasons which contributed to bring about this state of affairs. Already, before Novi, the Court of Vienna, seeing a prospect of extending its sway over the whole peninsula, was desirous that the Russians should leave Italy. Thugut, consequently, acquiesced readily in the British proposal that Suvorow and Korsakoff should unite in Switzerland with the Archduke and, after driving Massena from the country, enter France. Nevertheless, no sooner had Suvorow, fresh from his victory over Joubert, started upon his march across the

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mountains than the Archduke was ordered to evacuate Switzerland and take post upon the middle Rhine. Ostensibly this movement was to be undertaken for the purpose of recovering Mainz and of protecting southern Germany from invasion by the French. But it is more probable that the fear of Prussian aggrandisement, which was ever present at Vienna, was responsible for it. The Anglo-Russian expedition had landed in Holland and the Cabinet of London was pressing the Court of Berlin to co-operate in that direction.

The Archduke's withdrawal, carried out in spite of all Wickham could urge against it, had an immediate and disastrous effect upon the military situation. While Suvorow was fighting his way across the St. Gothard, Massena assumed the offensive and, on September 25, 1799, completely defeated Korsakoff and re-occupied Zurich. In addition to many prisoners, 100 guns and much war *materiel*, the whole of the Russian general's correspondence fell into the hands of the victors. Among the captured papers, reported Wickham, were communications from Pichegru and "the whole history of the intrigue of the Director Barras, all of which had been sent to M. de Korsakoff, in part from Mittau,¹ in part from St. Petersburg."² Meanwhile, Soult had overwhelmed General Hotze who had been posted with an Austrian division in the Grisons to keep up communications with Italy. Suvorow's position was thus rendered very critical and it is, perhaps, his highest title to fame that he succeeded in extricating himself from it. By a retreat, which will always rank as a great military achievement, he contrived to bring his sorely tried troops into Swabia and to unite them with the remnants of Korsakoff's army.

The effect of Massena's victory was not confined to

¹ In Poland, where Louis XVIII. was residing.

² *Wickham Correspondence*, II. p. 249.

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his own theatre of operations. Reassured about the situation in Switzerland, the Directory was enabled to reinforce Brune in Holland. The Anglo-Russians had begun to disembark in the Helder, at the end of August. The expedition had been planned under the idea that the Dutch were only waiting for an opportunity to cast off the constitution imposed upon them by the French and were eager to declare for the Prince of Orange. But this expectation was only realized in a very limited degree. Moreover, the military commanders appear to have been hampered by the lack of foresight which had characterized the ministerial preparations for the campaign. Perhaps that circumstance may account for the hesitating and irresolute fashion in which the operations were conducted. But, whether the blame for failure should be imputed to the government at home or to the generals on the spot, it seems to have been recognized, in the middle of October, that the French were daily acquiring strength, and that the Duke of York could make no progress. It was, accordingly, decided to conclude a convention with General Brune, under the provisions of which the Anglo-Russian army returned to England.

These reverses strained almost to breaking point the fragile bonds uniting the Powers which were parties to the coalition. The Tsar Paul, complaining not without reason that in Switzerland his armies had been sacrificed to the particularist policy of the Court of Vienna, announced his intention of severing his connection with his Austrian ally. The failure of the Duke of York's expedition, although it did not arouse his indignation to the same extent, nevertheless had a prejudicial effect upon Anglo-Russian relations. In the first instance, Paul would seem to have been content to vent his displeasure upon his own generals. Before long, however, the signs were plentiful that his liking for the English alliance had

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very sensibly diminished. But the restored *prestige* of the Republican arms and the threatened disruption of the coalition were alike insignificant matters compared with the importance of Bonaparte's sudden return to France. Abandoning his army in Egypt, he had contrived to escape the British cruisers and, on October 9, 1799, to disembark in safety at Fréjus.

It is said that Siéyès and Moreau, who had that morning arrived in Paris from Italy, were deep in conference when the news was brought to them that Bonaparte was back in France. "There's your man," said Moreau, "he will manage your *coup d'état* for you better than I shall."¹ Siéyès agreed, his only doubt was whether the newly arrived general might not do the business rather more thoroughly than he could wish. But it was a risk which could not be avoided. A month later, on November 9, 1799, the 18 *brumaire* according to the revolutionary calendar, the blow was struck at Saint Cloud which overthrew the Directory and placed France under the nominal rule of three Consuls, but practically under that of one man, the First Consul, General Bonaparte.

The tame fashion in which Barras tendered his resignation and sank submissively into obscurity is one of the mysteries connected with Bonaparte's assumption of the supreme power. The affair was, doubtless, managed with extreme skill by Talleyrand. But will it ever be known whether it was a bribe which induced the Director to retire, or whether it was the threat that, unless he would agree to depart quietly, the papers would be used against him which, Wickham relates,² had fallen into Massena's possession on the battlefield of Zurich?

¹ A. Vandal, *L'avènement de Bonaparte*, I. 233.

² V. p. 254.

CHAPTER XII

BONAPARTE, FIRST CONSUL

IN London no particular importance appears to have been attached to the news that Bonaparte had upset the Directory, broken up the legislative assembly, and assumed the control of the government. The conviction was general that the Republic was at the end of its resources and the *coup d'état* of *brumaire* was looked upon simply as an incident in its death agony. In ministerial circles some few persons may have suspected that Bonaparte might be a more than usually skilful general, but no one had an idea that the government of France had passed into the hands of the greatest military genius and the ablest administrator of all times. Lord Grenville imagined that he purposed to establish "a sort of American constitution with himself for president." But he could not conceive that he would find it possible at the same time to hold the Jacobins in check, suppress the Royalist insurrection in the west, and carry on a foreign war. Necessarily he would have to seek to conclude a peace. If, however, there were "a grain of sense in the councils of Austria that resource would fail him and he would then have no alternative but to prepare for his voyage to Cayenne, or to throw himself upon the Royalists." Austria and Russia must, therefore, be induced to prosecute the war vigorously and every endeavour must be made "to find employment for the French government in the interior, so as to prevent it from

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crushing the Vendée during the winter." "For the attainment of these ends," he assured Wickham, "that he looked with anxiety to his assistance. . . . You will see by my despatches how great a latitude I have thought myself justified in giving you. We have had experience enough of each other to make us both feel secure. I in giving it, you in using it."¹

The communication to which Lord Grenville referred is evidently the *separate and secret* despatch of November 29, 1799. Information, it ran, had reached the government that Bonaparte's proceedings were by no means approved of by the higher officers of the army, Massena being especially displeased with the new turn which events had taken. By reason of his "former extensive correspondence with the interior of France," Wickham might not improbably be enabled "to find some channel for a confidential communication" with him. Should it be possible to establish the desired intercourse, he was empowered, at his own discretion, to "enter into any engagements to any amount whatever," for the purpose of "securing the general's services, either to the cause of Royalty or upon any other principle to which he might be willing to accede."² Wickham probably understood the situation too well to imagine that, under existing conditions, Massena could be bribed to play the traitor. But, although he clearly regarded that particular plan as impracticable, he had several other schemes in hand for embarrassing the consular government and "finding employment for it in the interior."

Wickham had been an eye-witness of Korsakoff's discomfiture, on September 25, and had accompanied the defeated Russians in their retreat. Although he makes no mention of him in his despatches, it is

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, VI. pp. 52-53.

² F. O. Army in Switzerland 25, Grenville to Wickham, November 29, 1799.

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probable that Pichegru was also present at that affair. Wickham's private secretary, in an account which he has left of the first battle of Zurich, on August 14, refers to him as "that eminent individual" and states that he "arrived overnight at Mr. Wickham's quarters." On the following day, he relates that he watched the progress of the action from Mrs. Wickham's carriage and was invited to confer with the Archduke Charles.¹ With regard to the far more important affair of September 25, Pichegru, himself, at a later date, appears to have assured Fauche that he had more than once warned Korsakoff of the danger of the situation and had urged him to make different dispositions.² But, whether he was, or was not, actually present at Zurich on the day of the great battle, he was certainly, a few weeks later, at Augsburg, where Wickham was, also, residing. Suvorow's and Korsakoff's troops were at the time in cantonments between that town and the Lake of Constance and were preparing to start upon their homeward march, the Tsar being determined to take no further part in the continental war.

Wickham had striven to the best of his ability to smooth over the many difficulties which had arisen between the Russian and the Austrian commanders. But, while he regretted the Tsar's decision to recall his troops from the theatre of war, he was far from thinking that the situation would be seriously affected by his decision not to allow his people to participate in the next campaign.³ Personal contact with the Russian army had not disposed him to set a high value upon it. The lack of discipline among the rank and file, the absence of a trained staff and the ignorance of the superior officers rendered it, he reported, a very defective instrument of war especially in a mountainous

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, II. p. 148.

² Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. p. 340.

³ *Wickham Correspondence*, II. p. 333.

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country.¹ It is clear that he found it very difficult to form a fair and dispassionate judgment of Marshal Suvorow. He could do justice to his honesty of purpose and to his many soldierlike qualities, but his eccentricities of conduct offended his sense of propriety and inspired him with doubts as to his complete sanity.² On the other hand, he conceived a great admiration for the Austrian army, although, with the exception of the Archduke Charles, he admitted that it possessed no commander of the highest class. But the spirit of the troops, he declared, was much improved, and the last years of the war had produced a set of staff officers "some of whom, he felt convinced, would develop³ into the first generals of modern times."

While seeking to convince Lord Grenville of the immense superiority of the Austrian to the Russian army, Wickham was in close communication with the chief Royalist agents. Ever since the withdrawal of the British legation from Switzerland, in 1797, Dandré, who had escaped from Paris after the 18 *fructidor*, Précý, Bayard and several of the persons with whom he had formerly been connected, had made Augsburg their headquarters. The name of the Swabian agency had, in consequence, been given to their association by Louis XVIII. and his advisers. After the battle of Zurich and the retreat of the Russians, Pichegru, as has been related, had either followed, or had accompanied, Wickham to Augsburg, where they were joined by General Willot. Although Willot had escaped from Sinnamary at the same time as Pichegru, he and Barthélemy had only reached England at the end of June, 1799, both of them having been detained by illness in the West Indies.⁴ Being penniless they were granted

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, II. p. 261, 295.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 272-274, 297.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 320. *Fortescue Papers*, VI. p. 78.

⁴ F. O. France 54, Barthélemy to Grenville, April 18, 1799.

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an allowance by the government and a house was taken for them upon Barnes Common.¹ It was stipulated, however, that their arrival must be kept secret and they were requested to hold "no communication with any persons except those authorized to see them by His Majesty's ministers." Barthélemy, although desirous of retiring from politics and of leading in the future the life of a private individual, seems to have furnished Flint,² the superintendent of aliens at the Home Office, with some information of great retrospective interest concerning the rebels Edward FitzGerald and O'Connor and the efforts of the *United Irishmen* to incite a mutiny in the fleet. Willot, on the other hand, appears to have expressed a wish to be actively employed in the south of France, where he was well known, having, before the 18 *fructidor*, commanded the military district of Marseilles. He was, accordingly, directed to proceed to the continent and place himself in communication with Wickham.

Wickham had thus under his hand at Augsburg all the elements for creating trouble in France. By means of Dandré he could dispose of the *Institut philanthropique*,³ the ramifications of which extended throughout the country. At the same time, he could make use of Pichegru's popularity in Franche-Comté, Précý's influence at Lyons, and Willot's in Provence for setting in a blaze the whole of the eastern and southern districts. He was, however, determined that all insurrectionary movements should be subordinated to the operations of the regular armies of the coalition. It was evident that no further assistance from Russia could be expected. Nevertheless, he felt no doubt that Austria, with the help of England, could in the next campaign place in the field a better and more numerous army than any which Bonaparte could

¹ *Windham's Diary*, edited by Mrs. H. Baring, p. 412.

² F. O. France 54, Flint to King, July 18, 1799.

³ V. p. 190.

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collect. He was convinced that the Archduke might in the spring take up "a strong position" in France, "covered by three or four of the best frontier towns," which should be held as a means of compelling the French government to accept reasonable terms of peace. At the same time, "a general attempt could be made in the rear of the enemy's army to establish a party hostile to the existing government, which might assume colours more or less purely Royalist according to circumstances." He knew well, he wrote to Lord Minto, the British ambassador at Vienna, how greatly M. Thugut and the Archduke disliked the idea of co-operating with the *émigrés* whom they thoroughly distrusted. He could assure them, however, that the plan he proposed would not be left to them to execute, but would be carried out by Generals Pichegru, Willot and de Précý.¹

In the first instance, it was proposed to form and to place under Pichegru's leadership a corps of about 8000 men, consisting chiefly of deserters from the French army. With this contingent he might enter France in rear of the Austrians and, should the Royalists of the interior rally round him, Monsieur might appear upon the scene and take over the command from him.² This plan was, however, promptly rejected by Baron Thugut. Without doubt, he considered that the presence of a French prince would prove an embarrassment, should the campaign terminate successfully and should it come to a question of discussing the conditions of peace. Officially, however, he declared that a body of French deserters attached to the Imperial armies would have a most prejudicial effect upon the discipline of the troops.³

¹ *Wickham Correspondence*, II. pp. 354-356.

² F. O. Army in Switzerland 25, Wickham to Grenville, December 13, 1799.

³ F. O. Army in Switzerland 25 and 29, Wickham to Grenville, December 13, 1799. Grenville to Wickham, February 11, 1800.

Thugut's objections necessitated the abandonment of this part of Wickham's scheme. Willot, it was, therefore, decided, should proceed to Italy for the purpose of fomenting desertion in the French army and of taking into his pay the *Barbets*, as those deserters and brigands were called who infested the Genoese Riviera and the mountains of Provence. The original intention had been, wrote Wickham on February 28, 1800,¹ that "a powerful insurrection," directed by Pichegru and extending from Toulouse to Bordeaux, should connect Willot's operations with those of the Royalists in the west. But the news that the principal *Chouans* had made their peace with the consular government caused a less ambitious scheme to be adopted. If Willot could succeed in collecting a respectable fighting force and in penetrating into France, Pr  cy would raise the Royal standard at Lyons, while Pichegru would go to Bordeaux, where many of the principal inhabitants were well disposed to the cause of the monarchy, and establish a communication with the commanders of His Majesty's ships on that station. For purposes connected with these different enterprises Wickham placed £100,000 at Pr  cy's disposal and empowered his bankers to accept bills drawn by Pichegru, Dandr   and Willot, under the name of Henry Fuchs, to the amount of £35,000.²

In his private letter of November 30, 1799, parts of which have already been quoted, Grenville had announced that it was resolved to make "an immense effort against France,"³ during the next year. In addition to the insurrectionary movements which were under the immediate direction of Wickham, the British government was supplying the *Chouans* in Brittany

¹ F. O. Army in Switzerland 29, Wickham to Grenville, February 28, 1800.

² *Ibid.*, February 17, 1800.

³ *Fortescue Papers*, VI. p. 53.

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and in Normandy with the means of taking the field. In the autumn of 1799, encouraged by the political situation confronting the Directory, the Royalist chiefs in the west resolved to call upon their followers to rise. Assisted by large consignments of arms and money from England their first efforts met with a certain measure of success. The actual outbreak would seem to have occurred rather sooner than Lord Grenville and his colleagues could have wished.¹ Nevertheless, it was felt that every endeavour must be made to maintain the insurgents under arms. Monsieur was, accordingly, empowered to write to the chiefs directing them to offer to the Republican officers and soldiers pay equal to that which they received, or rather hoped to receive, from the Republican government. Furthermore, the inhabitants were to be assured that England was prepared to provision and to pay 74,000 men during the winter.²

The Comte d'Artois, although he was of active habits and in the prime of life, had never seen fit to share with his adherents the perils of the field. Certain French historians, especially those in sympathy with the Royalists, have sought to excuse his conduct by saying that he was constantly prevented by the British government from taking his natural place at the head of his followers.³ It is plain, however, that no impediments would have deterred a really determined man from going to the scene of action. Moreover, the assertion that it was the secret policy of the Pitt cabinet to hinder his departure from England appears to be supported by no trustworthy evidence. Assuredly, during the year 1799, the British government had fully intended that he

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, VI. p. 151.

² F. O. Army in Switzerland 25, Grenville to Wickham, December 24, 1799. B. M. Add. 37, 9222, *Windham's Diary*, November 7, 1799.

³ Hyde de Neuville, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 241-242.

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should take command of the Swiss levies, and, in a previous chapter,¹ it has been explained why it was found necessary to abandon this plan. Since that time, it appears to have been always the wish of the Cabinet that he should proceed to Brittany, at the first favourable opportunity. An entry in Windham's diary, however, suggests that he had no taste for an undertaking of that kind. "It did not appear to me," he writes on November 4, "that Monsieur seemed to catch on much at the idea, which I threw out, of his placing himself in any situation (the Isle of Wight was what I mentioned) to be nearer the scene of action."²

Before Monsieur's communication could reach the *Chouan* chiefs the *coup d'état* of the 18 *brumaire* took place, and Windham records the first impression which that event appears to have made upon Georges Cadoudal, the intrepid leader of the insurgent bands of the Morbihan. In a letter to the British admiral, Georges seems to have expressed some doubts as to the effect which "the revolution" would have upon the Royalists. Bonaparte, he conjectured, would offer them peace on very favourable terms. But no conditions would be accepted, he begged Sir John Warren to believe, provided England would continue to supply their requirements.³ Georges had thus divined correctly the course which Bonaparte intended to pursue towards them. His mistake consisted in imagining that the generous terms the First Consul was prepared to grant would be rejected. On that point he seems to have completely misjudged the sentiments of the majority of the Royalists. By the middle of January, 1800, all the principal *Chouans*, with the exception of Bourmont, Frotté and himself, had laid down their

¹ V. p. 250.

² B. M. Add. 37, 9222, *Windham's Diary*, November 4, 1799.

³ *Ibid.*, November 29, 1799.

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arms and agreed to the conditions offered them by the newly established government.

The pacification of the west was a measure to which Bonaparte attached supreme importance. He had been enabled to overthrow the Directory, because the most influential classes in France ardently desired that a strong government should be set up and that the war should be brought to an end. But, while the Royalists remained in arms, neither of those results could be attained. So long as France were divided, no government could be secure or durable. Nor was the insurrection in the west less of an obstacle to the conclusion of peace than it was to the establishment of a strong government. The overtures which Bonaparte had lost no time in addressing to England and Austria had been rejected, and his indirect approaches to the Tsar Paul had met with no response. Unless, therefore, he were prepared to relinquish the principal conquests of the Republic and renounce the doctrine of "natural frontiers," peace could be obtained only upon the battlefield. But his prospects of success in the next campaign would be gravely imperilled, should he be compelled to leave behind in western France a considerable portion of the army to hold the Royalists in check.

When he learnt that certain of the *Chouan* leaders had not accepted his terms, Bonaparte determined to waste no further time in parleying. Hastily despatching reinforcements to General Brune, he ordered him at once to begin active operations. A fortnight sufficed to obtain the desired result. Unable to withstand the onslaught of the columns which were launched against them, Georges and Bourmont tendered their submission. In Normandy Frotté still held out, but, by the middle of February, 1800, his situation had been rendered hopeless, and he, also, was forced to ask for a cessation of hostilities, in order to discuss the conditions of disarmament and surrender. Unfortunately

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for him, Bonaparte appears to have decided that the time had come for making a great example. The affair has been the subject of much controversy. It may be regarded as proved, however, that Frotté and some of his principal officers were invited to meet and confer with General Guidal¹ at Alençon. During the night, notwithstanding that they had been granted a safe conduct, they were seized, made prisoners, and sent off to Paris. But they were not allowed to proceed very far upon their journey. At Verneuil they were brought before a Court Martial, condemned and shot a few hours later.

Meanwhile, the British government having adopted Wickham's views as to the comparative merits of the Russian and the Austrian armies, had sent important proposals to Vienna. Although he professed to be far from satisfied with them, Baron Thugut, once he was assured of pecuniary support from England, instructed General Melas to begin hostilities. The Aulic Council had decided that the army of Germany should stand upon the defensive, while that of Italy should thrust back into France the numerically very inferior forces of General Massena holding the Apennines and the Maritime Alps. The motives which had induced the strategists at Vienna to adopt this course are obvious. In the first place, Austria desired to conquer and to hold the whole of northern Italy. Secondly, by making her chief effort in that direction she could receive support from the British fleet and from the expeditionary force which England had undertaken to

¹ According to certain writers Guidal, not Bonaparte, was the villain of this sombre tragedy. If it be true that he was something more than a passive instrument in the affair and that he was responsible for the treacherous manner in which Frotté was arrested, his fate must be regarded as a striking instance of retributive justice. Having become involved under peculiar circumstances in Malet's conspiracy in October, 1812, he was tried, condemned and shot along with him. The verdict, so far as Guidal was concerned, was probably unjust, inasmuch as he would seem to have had no previous knowledge of Malet's intentions.

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send to the Mediterranean.¹ Moreover, seeing that the French Army of the Rhine was strong and that of Italy was weak, the plan appeared to be based upon the excellent principle of containing the larger portion of the enemy's forces, while crushing the smaller with vastly superior numbers. In reality, however, the Austrian plan of campaign was radically unsound, inasmuch as Switzerland was neither friendly nor neutral, but was in possession of the French. From that circumstance it followed inevitably that the Austrians in the valleys of the Danube and of the Po would be unable to afford each other support, and would be in the position of two independent armies, both of which must act along separate lines of operations. So grave a mistake on the part of his adversaries did not escape Bonaparte's penetration, and, in order to reap the full benefit from it, he set himself to assemble an army between Dijon and the Lake of Geneva. Thus, while the Austrians in Germany and upon the Po would be debarred from rendering each other any assistance, he could direct his new army of reserve either to the support of Massena in Italy, or of Moreau upon the Rhine, as might seem most advantageous.

Wickham's reports on the eve of the opening hostilities are highly instructive. England having undertaken to subsidize contingents from Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and other German States for service against "the common enemy," he had been obliged to visit both Vienna² and Munich. But, while engaged in drawing up conventions and in signing treaties, he kept a watchful eye upon the proceedings of the French in Switzerland and along the Rhine. Their numbers, he notes at the end of February, 1800, were increasing, but "they were ill-paid, ill-fed, ill-clothed, and in

¹ F. O. Army in Switzerland 29, Grenville to Wickham, February 11, 1800.

² *Fortescue Papers*, VI. pp. 115-116.

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general expressed loud discontent." Nevertheless, he had no expectation that they would "attempt to throw off the yoke, unless the army should meet with a signal defeat, or unless the French standard should be raised by a French prince or by some commander of character and acknowledged talents."¹ A month later, however, he pays an unconscious tribute to Bonaparte's energy and powers of organization. "On the Rhine," he reports, "the men are now tolerably well clothed and have been paid a large proportion of the arrears due to them."² The Austrian army he considered to be "in excellent condition," and, moreover, he had reason to think that "Thugut was in real earnest this time."³ His spies had duly informed him that troops were being concentrated at Dijon. But the deductions which he appears to have drawn from that news were singularly erroneous. The First Consul, he conceived, must be proposing to allow the Austrians to cross the Rhine with the intention of overwhelming them later. The importance which he attached to "the camp at Dijon" was in connection with "Willot's enterprise," which he feared might, in consequence, be rendered "more difficult." The departure of Willot had been delayed because Wickham had insisted that he must obtain full powers from Louis XVIII. to act in his name. These he only received on March 21, and he was then obliged to proceed to Vienna, Thugut having desired to see him before he should set out for Italy. The *lettres patentes* from Mittau appear to have included secret instructions as to the conduct he might observe in certain contingencies in France. Incredible as it sounds, and yet Wickham can hardly have been mistaken, he seems to

¹ F. O. Army in Switzerland 29, Wickham to Grenville, February 28, 1800.

² F. O. Switzerland 29, Wickham to Grenville, March 24, 1800.

³ F. O. Switzerland 29, Wickham to Grenville, March 16, 1800; *Fortescue Papers*, VI. pp. 163-167.

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have had the King's authority "to use republican language and to declare his adhesion to the constitution, as it existed before the 18 *fructidor*, if he should find it to the real interests of the Royal cause so to do in the beginning."¹

General Melas, the Austrian commander in Italy, was old in years and slow by nature. Moreover, his concentration had been delayed by a heavy fall of snow. Consequently, it was not until April 5, 1800, that he took the field. But, if his preparations were conducted with undue deliberation, his first operations were none the less brilliantly successful. Falling with very superior numbers upon Massena's centre about Savona, he drove the French left wing back to the line of the Var, while he enclosed the remainder with the commanding general within the fortified *enceinte* of Genoa. Thus, at the very opening of the campaign, Massena was reduced to the direst straits. The magazines at Genoa were almost empty, the country was exhausted, and communication with France by sea was cut off by the British fleet. All his efforts to break out were foiled, and, on April 18, after heavy fighting, he was forced to abandon further attempts to escape. He succeeded, however, in sending a message to Paris to inform Bonaparte that he must now stand a siege and that he had only food to last for fifteen days.

The exact date would not appear to be known on which Bonaparte decided to lead across the Alps the Army of Reserve and attack Melas in rear. Many indications suggest that he would rather have made Germany the principal theatre of war. As he was to prove in subsequent years, one victory upon the Danube would be far more keenly felt at Vienna than a series of successful actions in the valley of the Po.

¹ F. O. Army in Switzerland 29, Wickham to Grenville, March 26, 1800.

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But, in these early days, he was obliged to take into account considerations which he could afford to disregard at a later period of his career. Moreau, the commander of the Army of the Rhine, was the one officer whose record could in any way be compared with his own, and, in spite of the support which he had received from him on the 18 *brumaire*, he would appear always to have looked upon him in the light of a potential rival. For the moment, however, he was prepared to make great sacrifices in order to ensure his loyal co-operation in the coming campaign. Their correspondence, from the time that Moreau arrived at Strasburg, points to the existence of amicable relations between them. It is interesting to note that in one of his letters he warned Bonaparte that Pichegru, passing under the name of Major Péron, was at Augsburg with Wickham, and that he would do well to be on his guard against him. Nevertheless, when the First Consul intimated that he might not improbably unite the Army of the Reserve with that of the Rhine, in order to overwhelm the Austrians upon the Danube, Moreau gave him clearly to understand that he would never consent to serve under his orders. Assuming that Bonaparte had no thought of asking him to act as his lieutenant, he assured him that he would gladly retire and hand over to him the supreme command.¹

Wickham appears to have had some knowledge of the affair, and in a cipher despatch, on March 22, makes the following curious allusion to it. "General Moreau has sent to Paris a very satisfactory account of the state of the army, in which he flatters the Consul in a manner by no means honourable to himself, pressing him to take the command, where he says his presence alone will be worth 30,000 men."²

¹ The relations of Bonaparte and Moreau have been made the subject of a careful study by Major Picard in a work entitled, *Bonaparte et Moreau*.

² F. O. Switzerland 29, Wickham to Grenville, March 22, 1800.

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Moreau's attitude, doubtless, caused Bonaparte to abandon his original plan and to decide upon striking a blow at Melas' communications in Italy. But he dared not venture to cross the Alps while the Austrians occupied the Black Forest. Moreau must, therefore, dislodge them, and, having accomplished that task, must consent to allow 25,000 men to be detached from his army to take part in the invasion of Lombardy. The discussion of the manner in which this operation should be carried out involved the consideration of strategical questions into which it is unnecessary to enter. Suffice it to say that Bonaparte allowed his incomparably better plan to be set aside and permitted Moreau to open the campaign in accordance with his own ideas. He was not greatly disturbed by the news of Massena's plight. Massena, he knew well, was a hard, determined man who would only surrender at the last extremity. It were far better, from Bonaparte's point of view, that the Austrian commander should be engaged in besieging Genoa than in watching the passes by which he hoped to issue into Lombardy. But even Massena could not hold out for ever, and, were he to be forced to capitulate, Melas would be set free and would doubtless draw nearer to the Alps. Time was, therefore, of vital importance, and Moreau's slowness in beginning operations tried his patience almost beyond endurance. But at last the news arrived that he had crossed the Rhine, on April 25, and had gained an important success at Stockach. At two o'clock in the morning of May 6, 1800, Bonaparte, after showing himself in public at the Opera, entered his travelling carriage and drove away rapidly and secretly to join the Army of Reserve.

Meanwhile, the government in London had learnt of Massena's discomfiture in Italy and had received Wickham's account of the splendid condition of

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Marshal Kray's army in the Black Forest.¹ There was, he begged Lord Grenville to believe, "a reunion of talents at the Austrian headquarters such as had never been assembled before. If all this is destined to be beaten, I can only say God's will be done and that He has some great object in view, beyond the reach of our faculties, of which the Consul is to be a leading instrument."² Pichegru, wrote Wickham a fortnight later, had received a letter from a friend in Paris who described as *une sorte de terreur* the feeling prevailing in the capital. Siéyès, Talleyrand, Fouché, Bernadotte, and even Lucien Bonaparte were said to be intriguing against the First Consul, who could not venture to go to the armies in the field. Possibly he might review the troops at Dijon, but he would never dare to be absent for any length of time.³ Ministers, moreover, were not dependent only upon Wickham and their other agents for news as to the state of affairs in Paris. Hyde de Neuville and Georges, the *Chouan* leader, had recently arrived in England, and their services were at the disposal of the government.

Some six months earlier, in September, 1799, the young Baron Hyde de Neuville had visited London. On that occasion, although there would seem to be no trace of the transaction in any English document, he is supposed to have received £20,000 from the British government.⁴ In truth, the plot upon which he and his friends were engaged must necessarily have been regarded with approval in London, seeing that it had for its chief object the delivery of Brest to the English. The capture was to be effected by means of a stratagem. With the help of a certain Vicomte du Bouchage, who

¹ F. O. Army in Switzerland 30, Wickham to Grenville, April 8, 1800.

² *Fortescue Papers*, VI. p. 183.

³ F. O. Army in Switzerland 30, Wickham to Grenville, April 22, 23, 1800.

⁴ E. Daudet, *Recits des temps revolutionnaires*, p. 7.

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had been employed at the naval arsenal under the old *régime*, Georges and his *Chouans*, disguised as Republican soldiers, were to be introduced into the town. Hyde appears to have been particularly anxious that Pichegru, whom he expected to find in England, should take part in the affair. Like many Royalists he believed that the appearance, at the right moment, of Pichegru by the side of Monsieur would have a profound effect upon the Republican generals. It would prove to them that, provided they would renounce their former errors, they had not only nothing to fear from the Bourbons, but might expect to receive both favours and rewards. Furthermore, he considered that Pichegru alone could succeed in uniting the moderate Republicans and the Royalists.¹

Returning to France by way of Jersey, the route usually followed by persons engaged upon his kind of business, Hyde was greeted upon his arrival with the news of the *coup d'état* of the 18 *brumaire*. Disconcerting as was this new development, he was far from thinking that it had rendered unattainable the end which he and his friends were seeking to achieve.² It would simply entail employing against Bonaparte the methods which they had intended to use against the Directory. Nor can there be any doubt about the nature of those methods. It is certain that he and his fellow conspirators purposed resorting to measures of the kind which Lord Grenville had condemned so severely, when Royer-Collard had proposed them to Talbot.³ In his *Mémoires*, Hyde merely says that he proceeded to arm and to equip a few picked men who were to be commanded by the Chevalier de Margadel, one of Frotté's *Chouans*.⁴ But, although he abstains from specifying the particular service upon

¹ Hyde de Neuville, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 240, 286, 288-289.

² *Ibid.*, p. 251.

³ V. p. 248.

⁴ Hyde de Neuville, *Mémoires*, I. p. 284.

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which they were to be employed, that portion of his correspondence,¹ which afterwards fell into the hands of the police, makes it clear that they were to strike the blow which was always referred to by those in the plot as the *coup essentiel*.

Nevertheless, blood-thirsty as were the intentions of the conspirators they managed to accomplish very little. The draping of the Madeleine in black, on January 21, 1800, the eighth anniversary of the King's execution, was the only exploit which they appear to have carried out successfully. Hyde, however, on two different occasions had interviews with Bonaparte. When the Royalists made their submission in Brittany and La Vendée, the leaders were directed to repair to Paris, in order that the First Consul might have an opportunity of discussing the situation with them, and Hyde was included among those to whom Bonaparte personally explained the advantages of entering his service and of abandoning a cause which he assured them was hopelessly lost. Georges, in his turn, having been forced to surrender was, also, ordered to Paris, where similar overtures were addressed to him. But neither he nor Hyde were prepared to renounce their political convictions. They had, however, in Frotté's recent fate a warning that it was dangerous to decline Bonaparte's offers, and they appear to have judged it prudent to leave Paris. Making for the coast, they crossed the channel in a fishing-boat, and in due course arrived in London.² Their flight took place about three weeks before the departure of the First Consul for Dijon and the army.

Georges Cadoudal, or Georges, to give him the name by which he was invariably known, was at this time in his thirtieth year. Although of peasant origin,

¹ The most important of these letters have been published by M. de Martel in his *Pacification de L'ouest*.

² Hyde de Neuville, *Mémoires*, I. pp. 306-307.

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his father being a small farmer near Auray in Brittany, he seems to have received a good education at the college of Vannes. Perhaps he was intended for the church, but, if he ever entertained the idea of entering the priesthood, he, doubtless, abandoned it on the outbreak of the civil war. Having been present at the principal battles in La Vendée, and having escaped from the death-trap at Quiberon, he became very famous as a guerilla leader in the irregular warfare of the later phases of the struggle. Windham has thus described the impression which he made upon him, when he saw him and conversed with him on the occasion of his first visit to England, in 1798. "Georges' look, voice, and manner is (*sic*) rustic, but he has that natural ease and confidence superior talents and strong mind give those who are possessed of them. Of all the men I have seen engaged in the affairs of the Royalists he gives me most the idea of one born to be a great man."¹

Windham, without doubt, greatly over-estimated the man's abilities. Probably he himself, a few years later, would have used somewhat different language about him. Unquestionably, Georges' reputation as a guerilla chief was well deserved. He was brave, resolute, resourceful, and understood how to command the obedience of his lawless followers. But he was without political sagacity, and knew nothing of the higher branches of the military art. He appears to have been animated by so fierce a personal resentment against Bonaparte, that it has been suggested that he was deeply offended because the First Consul seemed to regard him as of less importance than Bourmont d'Andigné and the *Chouans* of noble birth. Ardent Royalist as he was, he had a great dislike for the *noblesse* of his own country.² Nevertheless, his nephew

¹ B. M. Add. 37, 903, *Windham Papers*, Vol. LXII. *Notes of a Conversation with Georges*, April 13, 1798.

² A. Vandal, *L'avènement de Bonaparte*, II. pp. 448-449.



From an engraving

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and biographer admits that, after he had been a short time in England, his manners lost much of their roughness, an improvement which was due to the pains which he took to model his behaviour upon that of Windham, Pitt, and the ministers with whom he was brought into contact. He had always a taste for fine linen, and, on some occasion, it is related that he refused to be seen in Piccadilly with one of his officers who was badly dressed.¹ It was in accordance with his instinctive love of refinement that, when he arrived in London in April, 1800, he should repair to Grillon's, the most fashionable hotel of the day.²

Accepting the absurdly high estimate of him formed by Windham, Pitt and his colleagues appear to have placed implicit reliance upon Georges. He seems to have persuaded them that he could bring about the surrender of Calais, seeing that troops were actually collected at Dover and held in readiness to cross the channel and take possession of the town.³ But the great design upon Brest had to be temporarily abandoned. Early in May, the police in Paris discovered, at the house of the mistress of one of the conspirators, the correspondence relating to that affair which Hyde had most imprudently preserved and, before starting for England, had confided to a woman for safe custody. Most of the persons implicated in the plot appear to have succeeded in avoiding capture. The government, however, in order to show how unpatriotic were the aims of the Royalists, at once published most of the documents relating to Brest

¹ G. de Cadoudal, *Georges Cadoudal*, pp. 237-240.

² B. M. Add. 37, 9222, *Windham's Diary*, April 18, 1800. "Received note from Georges informing me of his arrival. Sent for him immediately. He had gone to Grillon's in Brook Street and passed under the name of Magon." N.B.—Windham speaks of Grillon's in Brook Street, but this is clearly an error. Grillon's was at No. 7, Albemarle Street, v. H. B. Wheatley, *Round about Piccadilly*, p. 191.

³ *Fortescue Papers*, VI. p. 228.

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and gave to the conspiracy the name of the English plot. Georges, however, assured ministers that Belle-Isle might be captured without difficulty. The plan of sending an expedition against it had been formed in the winter, while the *Chouans* were under arms. But, when it was seen that they could not maintain themselves in the field, it was decided to suspend the operation.¹ Without doubt, it was mainly the confidence with which Georges asserted his ability to muster in aid of the expedition a large number of his old followers that caused the idea to be revived. Accordingly, an advanced party under Colonel Nightingale set sail for the Island of Houat, at the beginning of May, followed, a fortnight later, by the main body, some 3000 strong, under Colonel Thomas Maitland. The Bay of Quiberon had been selected as the place where the transports, under the convoy of the fleet, were to assemble. Meanwhile, Georges himself left England, about the middle of May, and made his way back to Brittany, taking with him £20,000.²

A few days before Georges' departure, Grenville despatched a pressing message to Wickham instructing him to send back to England General Pichegru, "with the least notice and observation possible."³ Information, chiefly, as it would seem, through the channel of Monsieur, had reached the government that many of Bonaparte's generals were very discontented. Some of them had been the comrades and friends, in former days, of Pichegru, and it was hoped that he would be able to persuade them to give practical effect to their dissatisfaction.⁴ But, although he appears to have

¹ B. M. Add. 37, 9222, *Windham's Diary*, February 7, 1800.

² *Ibid.*, June 16, 1800; July 31, 1800. F. O. France 56, Georges to Frere, May 16, 1800.

³ F. O. Army in Switzerland 30, Grenville to Wickham, May 10, 1800.

⁴ F. O. France 56, Monsieur to Grenville, 17 Mai, 1800. Memorandum by M. du Theil, dated 31 Mai, 1800.

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travelled with all possible speed, he could not reach London before the end of June, and by that time the situation was completely changed.

Pitt and the chief members of his Cabinet had made no mistake in laying their plans upon the assumption that the consular government was in a most precarious state. Without doubt, Arena, the Italian Jacobin, while he lay in prison on a charge of plotting the murder of Bonaparte, faithfully described the condition of affairs in the letter which he wrote to the man whose death he was accused of seeking to encompass. "Everybody," he pleaded, "conspired." "It was talked of openly in the street and in the drawing-room. All parties were ready to take advantage of any movement which might occur, without knowing the direction from which it would come."¹ In the three months, during which he had filled the office of First Consul, Bonaparte had accomplished much. He had restored public confidence, improved the financial situation, and laid the foundations of his system of administration. Nevertheless, when he left Paris to assume the direction of the military operations, his position was still most insecure. It was not alone with the avowed hostility of the Royalists and of the Jacobins that he had to reckon. Many high officers of the army who, under the Directory, had talked loudly of the necessity of putting an end to the rule of the lawyers, were now indignant that a general like themselves should be at the head of the State. Nor could such a man as Siéyès, although he might not proclaim his dissatisfaction publicly, fail to resent the comparative obscurity to which he had been relegated. But, perhaps the most dangerous feature of the situation was the feverish anxiety of all who held office to safeguard their positions, should new political developments take place. No man could say what would

¹ Desmarest, *Quinze ans de haute police*, p. 40.

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happen or what party might rise to power, should Bonaparte be killed or should defeat overtake him. It was significant of the times that even his fellow Consul, Lebrun, should send a message to Dandré, Wickham's agent, assuring him of his "wish to serve the King, should a favourable opportunity offer."¹

Frenchmen had seen and heard so much of war, in the last eight years, that accounts of battles had no longer the power to stir them. But, in the summer of 1800, their interest in military operations revived. The campaign, it was universally believed, was to be final and decisive, and peace was to be wrung from the Austrians upon the battlefield. Bonaparte was a master of the art of attracting and fixing public attention. Without doubt, in different circumstances, he would have proved himself an incomparable journalist. His *bulletins* describing the passage of the great St. Bernard were read with breathless interest in Paris. People followed the progress of the army through the mountains and learnt of its descent into the plains of Lombardy and of the triumphal entry into Milan. But, having carried the story so far, the *bulletins* came to an abrupt termination. The next military intelligence which reached Paris came from another quarter and was of a different character. After an heroic resistance Massena had capitulated. Everyone remembered the course of events in the previous campaign and wondered whether history was about to repeat itself. The fall of Mantua had upset Joubert's reckonings; would that of Genoa have the same disturbing effect upon Bonaparte's calculations? Massena had been accorded the full honours of war and had marched away, unfettered by conditions, to join his left wing upon the Var. Nevertheless, it was plain to all that Melas was now free to concentrate an over-

¹ F. O. Army in Switzerland 80, Wickham to Grenville, August 16, 1800.

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whelming force for the destruction of the comparatively small French army. During those anxious days, while the town awaited news, all the leading men in Paris may be said to have conspired. The Consuls Lebrun and Cambacères, men like Siéyès, Talleyrand, Lucien Bonaparte and Fouché knew well that the political fortune of the First Consul was staked upon the issue of the first decisive engagement. They had too much revolutionary experience not to realize the importance of being prepared for changes which might be brought about, at any moment, by the news of a battle lost. Secret conferences¹ were held at which the strength of parties was calculated and the merits were discussed of the different candidates, who might be put forward to succeed Bonaparte. Moreau, it is said, was placed upon one side because he was not a regicide, and because of his former suspicious relations with Pichegru. Finally, it appears to have been agreed that no safer choice could be made than that of Carnot, the Minister of War.²

On June 20, 1800, private information reached Paris from Milan that a hotly disputed battle had been fought. But, neither that day nor during the night, was any official confirmation of the news received. On the following morning, a reception of the *corps diplomatique* was to be held at the Tuileries. As the hour appointed for the ceremony drew near, ministers and officials began to assemble in the anti-chambers. Suddenly the news spread that several couriers had arrived from the army, and in a moment the words "victory" and "Marengo" were on every tongue. The principal persons present were at once admitted to the private room of the Consuls, where they were

¹ Readers of Balzac may remember the description of the midnight conference given in the last chapter of *Une ténébreuse affaire*.

² A. Sorel, *L'Europe et la révolution*, VI. pp. 48-49. Carnot, like almost all the victims of the 18 fructidor, had been recalled by Bonaparte after the *coup d'état* of brumaire.

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privileged to listen to the thrilling military romance which Bonaparte desired should pass for an account of the battle of Marengo. While the thunder of the guns proclaimed the news to the people, they heard how the First Consul, moving southwards from Milan, had taken up a position athwart the great road from Alessandria to Mantua. They were told how the Austrians, in a desperate effort to regain their lost communications, had, on June 14, advanced to the attack across the Bormida. The famous *bulletin* related how the battle was joined; how it raged fiercely, how Kellermann charged, and how Desaix, arriving opportunely, completed the discomfiture of the Austrians and fell in the hour of victory. More than a passing allusion was made to so dramatic an episode. Both the dying message, which he had never sent, and the agonized reply, which his words were supposed to have evoked from Bonaparte, were set forth with great effect.¹ The story, however, concluded with a statement which admitted of no exaggeration. The campaign was over. Melas had been forced to fight under conditions so unfavourable that the loss of one battle had rendered his situation hopeless. He had asked for an armistice and the First Consul had acceded to his request. Ten days later Bonaparte was himself back in Paris. His return was almost as secret and unexpected as his departure. Without doubt, he was not entirely ignorant of the plots and the intrigues which had been hatched in his absence.

About a fortnight earlier, Colonel Maitland's expedition had arrived at Quiberon. No difficulty was experienced in establishing communications with Georges. But the news which he had to impart was

¹ *Desaix*—as he fell: "Tell the First Consul that I die regretting that I have not done enough to live in history." *Bonaparte*: "Why am I precluded from indulging in tears." According to his aide-de-camp, Desaix was killed on the spot and only uttered the word "dead." See A. Vandal, *L'avènement de Bonaparte*, II. pp. 425-426.

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not encouraging. In spite of the assurances of which he had been so prodigal in London,¹ he had been unable to assemble under arms any considerable number of *Chouans*. "Some forty bandits," according to Bernadotte,² "under the command of Saint-Régent alias Pierrot, a heretofore noble," appear to have been the largest body of men which took the field. Moreover, Georges professed to have learnt from trustworthy sources that there were not less than six thousand Republican troops at Belle-Isle. Maitland, after reconnoitring the place, felt little doubt that he had over-estimated the strength of the garrison and determined to begin operations at once. But Georges having sent him a second message, urging him to postpone his attack until he should receive further reinforcements from England, he came to the conclusion that it would be imprudent "to fly in the face of his advice."³

The correspondence of Bernadotte and the principal Republican officers proves that Maitland's appreciation of the situation was far more correct than that of Georges. Bonaparte had withdrawn so many regiments from the west and incorporated them in to the army which he proposed to lead into Italy, that Bernadotte's entire command, at this time, would not appear to have exceeded 16,000 troops with which he had to watch one hundred leagues of coast and thirteen departments.⁴ Belle-Isle is stated to have been in a deplorable condition, and the garrison, which consisted of between 3,000 and 4,000 men,⁵ is described, on

¹ B. M. Add. 37, 9222, *Wickham's Diary*, July 31, 1800.

² Archives de la guerre. *Armée de l'ouest*. Bernadotte à Carnot, Mai 24, 1800. Bernadotte was in command of the Army of the West.

³ W. O. I. 183, Maitland to Dundas, May 30, June 6, 10, 21, 1800.

⁴ Archives de la guerre. *Armée de l'ouest*. Bernadotte à Carnot, Mai 15, 1800.

⁵ Archives de la guerre. *Armée de l'ouest*. Debelle à commissaire-general, Avril 12, 1800. Debelle à Bernadotte, Avril 23, 1800.

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June 19, as being in a state of *denument complet*.¹ It is evident, therefore, that Georges was either extremely badly informed or that he was acting in bad faith and had some reason of his own for desiring that the British attack on Belle-Isle should not take place. If that were his wish it was realized to the full. In the vacillating spirit which characterized all its military operations Pitt's Cabinet decided, on June 16, to abandon the attempt upon Belle-Isle and to divert to the Mediterranean Maitland's 4000 men.² The naval blockade, that officer was informed, would be maintained and, in the course of a few days, "a small division of troops" would be sent him for the purpose of "alarming and annoying the enemy." But, on July 6, Georges apprised him of "the melancholy reverse which had taken place in Italy,"³ and, a few days later, he received further orders from home directing him to return to England.⁴ At the same time, Lord Grenville wrote personally to Georges telling him that the armistice concluded in Italy "had put an end to all our plans in the west," and that he could, in consequence, only recommend him "to keep his people quiet" for the present.⁵

The actual treaty between Austria and Great Britain had only been signed, on June 20, 1800, a few hours before the news of the battle of Marengo reached Vienna. Thus, at the moment when one of his commanding generals was hopelessly defeated in Italy, and when another, in Germany, was completely out-manceuvred by Moreau, the Emperor found himself, in consideration of a subsidy of 2½ million pounds, pledged to make no peace with France before

¹ Archives de la guerre. *Armée de l'ouest*. Debelle à Bernadotte, Juin 19, 1800.

² W. O. I. 183, Dundas to Maitland, June 16, 1800.

³ W. O. I. 183, Maitland to Dundas, July 6, 1800.

⁴ W. O. I. 183, Dundas to Maitland, July 4, 1800.

⁵ F. O. France 56, Grenville to Georges, July 2, 1800.

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February 1, 1801. Austria might reasonably complain of the manner in which England had performed her part in the operations, which had ended so disastrously upon the banks of the Bormida. Her badly timed and ill-executed demonstrations upon the coast of Brittany had not prevented Bonaparte from reinforcing his Army of Reserve with troops withdrawn from the west of France.¹ In the Mediterranean the conduct of her military affairs had been even more ineffectual. The idea of striking at the French communications, at some point along the coast between Genoa and Marseilles, was strategically sound. Unfortunately, however, the expeditionary force which was to carry out that operation only reached Minorca on June 22, eight days after Melas had lost the battle of Marengo.

It was, also, made a subject of complaint against England that Wickham had failed to supply the Austrian commanders with intelligence, which, if transmitted to them, would have enabled them to counteract Bonaparte's plans. In that respect, however, Wickham would seem to have been altogether undeserving of reproach. In the campaign of 1799, his agent, Dandré, had frequently provided the Imperial generals with very valuable information, for which he had received their warmest thanks. But, after the resignation of the Archduke Charles, the Austrian intelligence department appears to have fallen into a state of utter confusion. Thus it happened that when Dandré, at the end of April, forwarded the news that Bonaparte purposed leading the Army of Reserve, 50,000 strong, across the Alps into Italy, his courier was detained for eighteen days at the Austrian outposts, and this most important piece of news reached Wickham too late to be of any service. Only, at the end of May, would he appear to

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, VI. p. 247.

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have realized that, to use his own words, "the fate of Germany as well as that of Italy would be decided between General Melas and the Consul Bonaparte in the plains of Piedmont or the Milanese."¹

England, on her side, had just cause for anger at the many obstructions which the Court of Vienna had placed in the way of General Willot. It will be remembered that Wickham, attaching great importance to the insurrection which Willot hoped to be able to excite in Provence, had provided him with money and sent him to Italy. But to carry out his purpose, he must obtain the support and assistance of the Imperial generals, and Baron Thugut was still convinced that it was to the interest of Austria to thwart the endeavours of the French Royalists to upset the Republic. Willot, in consequence, after having been detained for an unnecessarily long time at Vienna, found, when at last he was allowed to proceed to Italy, that he could expect neither sympathy nor help from General Melas,² and, a few weeks later, Marengo extinguished his last hopes of entering Provence at the head of a Royalist contingent. With regard to Willot, however, it must be admitted that, even had the Austrians adopted a different attitude towards him, it is most improbable that with his *Barbets* and deserters he would have succeeded in seriously embarrassing Bonaparte's operations.

The suspension of hostilities in Italy was followed by an armistice, signed, on July 15, by Generals Moreau and Kray. Bonaparte was prepared to make peace upon the same terms as at Campo-Formio. Austria, however, hesitated hoping for better conditions. By her recent treaty with England she was

¹ F. O. Army in Switzerland 30 x 31, Wickham to Grenville, May 28, August 16, 1800.

² F. O. Army in Switzerland 30 x 31, Wickham to Grenville, May 27, August 14, 1800.

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entitled to a subsidy, so long as she forebore from concluding a peace with France. Her armies, however, were in no condition to resume the struggle. Nevertheless, given time and English gold, her military situation would soon improve. She, therefore, endeavoured to involve Bonaparte in negotiations, with the intention of protracting them, until she should consider that she was strong enough once more to enter the field. But Bonaparte, although anxious for peace, was not to be duped by diplomatic artifices. Having consented to a renewal of the armistice, and having allowed the negotiations to proceed until the beginning of November, he gave Austria the option of accepting his terms or of again appealing to the sword. At the end of the month hostilities began afresh, and, on December 2, Moreau inflicted a terrible defeat upon the Archduke John at Hohenlinden. In Italy the operations of General Brune were equally successful. Discomfited in both theatres of war, Austria was once again compelled to sue for a suspension of hostilities. Negotiations on this occasion proceeded so rapidly that, on February 9, 1801, Austria signed at Lunéville a treaty of peace, the conditions of which were far less favourable than those which she might have obtained in the autumn.

In England the growing movement in favour of peace was strengthened by the Treaty of Lunéville. The state of public opinion on the question of the continuance of the war was, doubtless, the main, although not the avowed, reason of Pitt's resignation. Lord Hawkesbury, who held the seals of the Foreign Office in Mr. Addington's government, lost no time in making friendly advances to Bonaparte. Thus negotiations were begun, in the spring of 1801, and were continued without interruption, while Abercrombie wrested Egypt from the French. This volume is not concerned with the important events of the first

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half of this year and with their bearing upon the questions at issue between England and France. How England and Russia came to an open rupture, how the armed neutrality was revived, how the Tsar Paul was murdered, and how the battle of Copenhagen was fought are matters of general history. Suffice it to point out here that the reconciliaion of the Cabinets of St. Petersburg and of London, which was the immediate consequence of Alexander's accession, compelled Bonaparte to lay aside, for a while, his great plan of destroying the British Empire. The preliminaries of peace were, accordingly, concluded in London, on October 1, 1801, and the definite treaty was signed, six months later, at Amiens.

CHAPTER XIII

GEORGES, PICHEGRU AND MOREAU

IN the period between Marengo and the Treaty of Lunéville, England in no way relaxed her endeavours to stir up internal trouble in France. When, in consequence of the unsuccessful issue of the campaign in Italy, Maitland was directed to discontinue his efforts against Belle-Isle and return home, Georges followed him to London. About a fortnight earlier, in the last days of June, Pichegru, also, arrived in England.¹ It has been related in the previous chapter² that Grenville had sent for him, with the idea that he might be able to establish relations with certain French generals who were believed to be desirous of shaking off the yoke of the First Consul. But, in the interval between his departure from the seat of war in Germany and his arrival in England, the battle of Marengo was fought. The idea that Bonaparte might be overthrown by means of a military *pronunciamento* had appeared reasonable, while the issue of his operations in Italy had been in doubt. The chances that it could be carried out successfully were, however, greatly diminished once he was back in Paris, after a brilliant and decisive campaign. The moment was, therefore, unfavourable for the prosecution of the particular scheme which had brought Pichegru to England. But, having been introduced to Georges,³

¹ F. O. France 56, Roll to Frere, June 30, 1800.

² V. p. 278.

³ B. M. Add. 37, 9222, *Windham's diary*, September 16, 1800.

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he appears to have spent much time in his company and to have entered readily into the different plans for which he hoped to obtain the favourable consideration of the British government.

The capture of Brest, by means of a stratagem not dissimilar to that which Hyde de Neuville's correspondent had intended to employ,¹ appears to have been one of the subjects which Georges and Pichegru discussed with Pitt in person.² It is probable that Georges, also, held out hopes that he would be able to gain possession of Belle-Isle with the help of the many friends whom he professed to have among the garrison. Whether he did, or did not, on this occasion talk over the affair with Mr. Pitt, it is certain that, on his return to Brittany, he sent back assurances to England that some of his adherents were serving in the Republican regiments stationed at Belle-Isle. With regard to Brest, it appears to be true that he contrived to establish relations with a naval lieutenant named Rivoire,³ who pretended to be able to introduce a party of *Chouans* into the town. But the man was an obscure officer, deeply in debt, without either rank or influence, and it says little for Georges' perspicacity that he attached any importance to his statements. At Belle-Isle, several non-commissioned officers and privates were, in the spring of 1801, charged with having entered into treasonable relations with Georges and two of them appear, in consequence, to have suffered the death penalty. It is evident, however, that the

¹ V. p. 273.

² B. M. Add. 37, 9222, *Windham's diary*, July 31, 1800, August 17, 1800.

³ Rivoire was subsequently tried by a Court-martial, which declared him guilty of having been in relations with Georges and the British government for the purpose of delivering up Brest. Nevertheless the same Court acquitted him. Its members incurred the severe displeasure of the First Consul, who directed that Rivoire should be re-tried. On this second occasion he was sentenced to be transported. He, at a later date, appears to have been a secret agent of Fouché.

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disaffection at Belle-Isle was limited to a few individuals whose numbers were deliberately exaggerated by Georges.¹ Indeed, his conduct throughout the affair is highly suspicious. In June, 1800, when Maitland was anxious to attack the place with a British brigade, he did all in his power to dissuade him from carrying out his intention, assuring him that the garrison consisted of 6,000 dependable troops.² Nevertheless, six months later, he is to be found boasting that he could do what he "pleased with this same garrison which he described as composed almost entirely of his own followers.

Both Georges and Pichegru appear to have left England on September 17, 1800. While the *Chouan* chief returned to his native Brittany, Pichegru went to Germany with the idea, apparently, of fomenting discontent in Moreau's army, which was awaiting in Bavaria the signal to begin hostilities. According to Windham, he set out with no distinct plan but that "of being in the way and holding such communication as he could with the generals."³ For obvious reasons it was desirable that he should remain upon Prussian territory and, in the first instance, he seems to have gone to Wesel. But, before the truce came to an end, he joined Précý, Imbert-Colomés, Dandré and the other members of the Augsburg agency at Bayreuth.⁴ During the short and brilliant campaign of Hohenlinden he had, doubtless, few opportunities of corresponding with his "well-disposed" friends,⁵ and, after the Peace of Lunéville, Bonaparte entered a strong protest at Berlin against his proceedings and those of his companions at Bayreuth. Having been privately

¹ Martel, *Les Historiens fantaisistes*, 2^{me} Partie, pp. 263-265.

² V. p. 283.

³ B. M. Add. 37, 9222, *Windham's diary*, September 16, 1800.

⁴ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 354-358.

⁵ Windham, on September 16, says that Pichegru "mentioned Lecombe as one of those who were well disposed."

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warned by the Prussian authorities that his extradition had been demanded, he took the hint and returned as expeditiously as possible to England. Shortly afterwards, Précý and Imbert-Colomés were taken into custody, but their papers only were delivered up to the French government.¹ Bonaparte, however, had attained his purpose. The so-called Swabian agency was effectually broken up.

Georges, in the meantime, was supposed to be busily engaged in maturing his plans for surprising Brest and Belle-Isle. It has already been pointed out that the persons with whom he was in correspondence were subaltern officers and non-commissioned officers, and that it is difficult to believe that he can seriously have expected that, with their assistance, he would be able to gain possession of either of these two ports. It may be that he was the dupe of some of these individuals, but it is far more probable that he himself was practising upon the credulity of British ministers. Without doubt, he reckoned that Pitt would supply him liberally with gold, if once he could persuade him that it was in his power to deliver up two important military ports to England. Nevertheless, the First Consul had no more determined enemy than Georges, notwithstanding that his talk about seizing Brest and Belle-Isle was, doubtless, a mere device for extracting money from the British government. Ever since his interview with him, after the so-called "pacification of the west," he appears to have looked upon it as essential that Bonaparte should die.

While in Brittany, in June, 1800, co-operating, or pretending to co-operate, with Colonel Maitland, Georges, more than once, alludes in his correspondence to the *coup essentiel* which he trusted would be delivered in Paris. Before leaving London, he seems to have urged Hyde de Neuville to return to France

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 379-381.

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to re-organize his band of cut-throats, which had dispersed when the police had laid hands upon the documents recording the objects of the conspiracy. Some two months later, both he and Monsieur's friend and aide-de-camp the Marquis de Rivière, unquestionably went to Paris and appear to have endeavoured to act upon Georges' advice. But Fouché was soon upon their track.¹ In October, the Chevalier de Margadel, *alias* Joubert, who, in the former plot had been selected to command Hyde's "little troop,"² was arrested, summarily tried and shot upon the plain of Grenelle. Rivière, however, escaped to England, while Hyde appears to have concealed himself successfully in the shop of a Royalist hair-dresser in the Rue du Four-Saint-Germain.³ By that time, however, Georges was back in the Morbihan and, on learning that Margadel was in prison and that the other conspirators had either fled or had gone into hiding, resolved to take the matter in hand himself. He, accordingly, despatched to Paris certain *Chouans* of tried ferocity, among them being two nobles, Saint-Régent and Picot de Limoëlan,⁴ and Carbon, a man of low extraction who passed as Picot's servant. The event was speedily to prove that he had chosen the right men for his purpose. On December 24, 1800, as Bonaparte was driving through the Rue Saint-Nicaise to the Opera, a barrel of gunpowder was exploded which killed and wounded several passers-by and soldiers of his escort. Almost by a miracle he himself escaped unhurt.

¹ F. O. France 56, Georges to Grenville, June 6, 1800. Martel, *Historiens fantaisistes*, 2^{me} partie, pp. 298-305.

² Hyde de Neuville, *Mémoires*, I. p. 284.

³ *Ibid.*, I. p. 355.

⁴ An interesting account of this man is to be found in *Vieux Papiers, vieilles maisons*, by G. Lenotre, 3^{me} série. After the attempt of the 3 nivose he was concealed by his uncle, the Père de Clorivière, a Jesuit, and eventually escaped to the United States, where he became a priest, and took his uncle's name of Clorivière. He died in 1826 at the establishment of the Sisters of the Visitation at Georgetown, U.S.A.

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In the first instance, Bonaparte ascribed this attempt upon his life to the Jacobins. Fouché, however, soon caught and brought to justice two of the principal culprits, Saint-Régent and Carbon. At their trial their guilt was proved conclusively and Georges' complicity in their crime was, at the same time, established. Once it was discovered that the affair of the 3 *nivose* was the work of the *Chouans*, Bonaparte loudly accused the British government of having instigated them to commit their dastardly outrage. Nor, if the facts of the case be impartially considered, is it possible to dismiss the charge as altogether unfounded. Most certainly no member of Mr. Pitt's government had any knowledge that there was a plot to blow up Bonaparte with gunpowder. But Georges, in his correspondence with the British government,¹ talked openly of the *coup essentiel* which must be struck in Paris, and Windham's diary² makes it clear that ministers perfectly understood the meaning of that and similar expressions. The following entries speak for themselves. On August 13, 1800, he writes: "General Georges . . . predicts that Bonaparte will be cut off before two months are over, though he professes not to know specifically of such intention, seems to think such a course of proceeding legitimate and has thrown out the idea to Pitt as he has before to me. Not necessary to say that no countenance was given to it." On September 16, 1800, he records a conversation with Pichegru who "talked of the design to cut off Bonaparte by assassination and of the general instability of the government to which latter opinion I felt inclined to assent. On the other hand, having before expressed my opinion I did not now say anything."

¹ These letters are to be found in F. O. France 56. Some are addressed directly to ministers, others appear to have been sent to the Foreign Office by Monsieur or his agents.

² B. M. Add. 37, 9222, *Windham's diary*.

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On September 19, 1800, he gives an account of an interview with the Chevalier de Bruslart, one of the deceased Frotté's lieutenants. "He made," he records, "wild proposals of carrying off or cutting off Bonaparte to which I pointedly declared that a British minister could give no countenance." It is evident, therefore, that Pitt, Windham, and, without doubt, other ministers and their subordinates, were perfectly aware¹ that certain Royalists contemplated the assassination of Bonaparte. No reason exists, however, to disbelieve the statement that they gave "no countenance" to any plans of that nature. But it is clear that the knowledge which they possessed of these men's intentions did not deter them from supplying them with money and with the means of returning to France.²

When, on March 14, 1801, Pitt and Grenville were succeeded by Addington and Hawkesbury, the practice of subsidizing conspirators was for the time being discontinued. Although hostilities were not immediately suspended, conciliatory overtures were at once addressed to France. The new Cabinet being essentially a peace Cabinet, great care was taken to avoid everything calculated to irritate Bonaparte. Windham, however, who was one of the retiring ministers, was indefatigable in pleading the cause of Georges who, should peace be concluded, could not fail to be hunted down sooner or later. So long as the Republican troops were employed in Germany and Italy, he would seem to have been in no great danger, notwithstanding that Bonaparte had strictly enjoined both the civil and military authorities to spare no

¹ Such as Charles Flint, the Superintendent of Aliens at the Home Office.

² B. M. Add. 37, 9222, *Windham's diary*, November 24, 1800, "Arrival of Prigent with letters from Georges. . . . When he (Georges) went over he took about £12,000 or £14,000 with him, a few more sent since."

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pains to take him, dead or alive. French historians invariably describe him, at the time when his agents in Paris were preparing their "infernal machine," as terribly hard pressed by his pursuers. Windham's diary, however, gives a different description of his existence at that period. These details about Georges were given Windham by his favourite emissary, Prigent, who, when he was caught and shot in 1808, was said to have performed the perilous journey between England and the coast of Brittany on no less than one hundred and eighty-three different occasions. According to him, the search was not strict for Georges, who sometimes amused himself with a day's shooting. Once, when he was enjoying that pastime with him, "a party of the *marechaussée* rode up to them, but made off on seeing that they were ready for resistance."¹

But, when Austria made peace and England prepared to follow her example, Georges' position became desperate. "His life," urged Windham, "was in the most imminent danger every moment that he stayed in France." In view of his services, he maintained that immediate steps must be taken to save him, seeing that, once the war was at an end, nothing could be done to help him.² Hawkesbury agreed and Prigent was, accordingly, sent to Brittany to arrange for the conveyance to England of Georges and some fifty *Chouans*, who were either in the British pay,³ or whose past history rendered it advisable that they should escape from France before the conclusion of peace. Most of these men were taken to Jersey, and

¹ B. M. Add. 37, 9222, *Windham's diary*, November 24, 1800, December 6, 1800.

² F. O. France 56, Windham to Hawkesbury, March 25, 28, 1801,

³ B. M. Add. 37, 851, *Windham papers*. "A list of persons who received an allowance from the British government for their services on the coast of France," among them Bourmont figures for a sum of 5*s. per diem*, Madame Trommelin 12*s. per diem*, the Bishop of Vannes £10 *per month*. Saint-Régent, the author of the outrage in the Saint-Nicaise, was in receipt of 8*s. per diem*.

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the idea of sending them to Canada¹ was at one time considered. Georges himself was brought to London, where he seems to have arrived about the end of March, 1801. The authorities, however, appear to have been very anxious that his presence in England should not be known. In the first instance, Dunstable and, later on, St. Albans was selected as his place of abode. But it is clear that sometimes he visited London, on which occasions he would lodge in Down Street, Piccadilly. During all this time he seems to have passed by the name of Masson² and to have been in receipt of an allowance of £8 a week from the British government.³

In England the public satisfaction at the termination of the war was of brief duration. Misgivings were loudly expressed, directly the conditions were known under which peace had been obtained. The treaty, men complained, imposed no check upon Bonaparte's ambitious designs. England, it was felt, had conceded too much and had received too little in return. The manufacturing and trading classes were disappointed and indignant that no commercial treaty could be arranged. In spite of all remonstrances, Bonaparte insisted upon maintaining a tariff so prohibitive that the entry of British goods into France was almost as much hampered under pacific, as under warlike, conditions. "Peace in a week and war in a month," was Malmesbury's comment upon the situation

¹ F. O. France 58. *Note remise par le general Georges concernant les Royalistes auxquels le gouvernement britannique pourrait accorder l'hospitalité au Canada.*

² The entry in Windham's diary from which this information is drawn is unfortunately in pencil and is in places illegible. Hence it is difficult to determine the exact date of Georges' arrival in London. But that it was approximately some time at the end of March, 1801, is certain. His biographer places it at the end of the year 1801, but that is clearly incorrect (Cadoudal, *Georges Cadoudal*, p. 277). On April 16, 1801, he was in England, as is proved by an entry in Windham's diary.

³ F. O. France 58, Green to Hammond, October 15, 1801.

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on the eve of the signature of the definitive treaty. The peace, the same distinguished diplomatist records, was described by the King as "a fearful experiment." Even Addington, the Prime Minister, admitted that the situation demanded the maintenance of a "strong and powerful peace establishment."¹

As the conviction grew in ministerial circles that the peace could only be regarded in the light of a temporary truce, the necessity was recognized of keeping a keen watch upon Bonaparte's proceedings. Accordingly, under the personal direction of Hammond, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, a system of secret observation was established, which a Russian diplomatist pronounced to be more efficient and perfect than any which had ever existed.² But the agents employed by England were not engaged solely in transmitting such news as they could glean about the First Consul's supposed plans and military preparations. One of them, at least, was charged with the task of endeavouring to effect an understanding with the man who was now regarded as his only serious rival. The return to peaceful conditions had produced restlessness and discontent in the army. Moreover, the republican sentiments and anti-clericalism of the majority of the officers had been deeply offended by the increasing absolutism of Bonaparte's rule and by his decision to re-establish a State religion. So keenly was the *Concordat* resented that the First Consul, who had projected a great ceremony at which the colours were to be blessed, found it expedient to abandon the idea.³ A plot was discovered at Rennes in which Bernadotte, who commanded the district, was probably implicated.⁴ But Moreau was the centre around which was grouped the military opposition

¹ *Malmesbury Diary*, IV. pp. 72-73.

² A. Sorel, *L'Europe et la révolution*, VI. pp. 222, 223.

³ E. Guillon, *Complots militaires sous le consulat*, p. 9.

⁴ *L'affaire des libelles*.

party which the peace had brought into existence. Whether he bore some personal grudge against Bonaparte, or whether his political sentiments had been outraged by recent measures, it was to the victor of Hohenlinden that the discontented officer instinctively turned. This state of affairs was duly reported to the British government which, on June 5, 1802, scarcely ten weeks after the conclusion of the peace of Amiens, despatched Fauche to Paris with instructions to endeavour to bring about a reconciliation between Moreau and Pichegru.¹

It has been shown in the last chapter that, during the Marengo campaign, Bonaparte's intercourse with Moreau was of a friendly, if not of a cordial, character. Although he had given the First Consul clearly to understand that he would not be prepared to act as his second-in-command in the field, Moreau had supported him in circumstances which would have put the loyalty of any general to a severe test. While actually engaged with a strong and numerous enemy he had been asked, and had consented, to detach a considerable fraction of his army to another theatre of war. Nevertheless, in the course of the next six months the friendliness of their relations greatly diminished. Various reasons have been adduced to explain the hostile attitude which, from about the beginning of the year 1801, they appear to have assumed towards each other. It has been said that Bonaparte's jealousy was aroused by the very complete and decisive character of the battle of Hohenlinden, and that he endeavoured to detract from Moreau's personal share in that victory. Moreau, who was a vain man, is supposed to have been greatly irritated by the pointed manner in which the First Consul addressed his congratulations to the army, not to its commander. Other slights are said to have been put

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, pp. 13-14.

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upon him. No attention was paid to his recommendations that certain officers should be promoted, and criticisms were passed upon his accounts, which seemed to imply that he had diverted to his own use moneys¹ levied by requisition in Germany. On the other hand, it has been contended that Moreau was mainly to blame for the state of affairs which had arisen. Bonaparte, it has been said, had so sincere a regard for him that he was desirous that he should marry either Caroline, his sister, or Hortense de Beauharnais, his stepdaughter. But Moreau, when proposals of that kind were made to him, curtly declined them, and shortly afterwards announced his engagement to Mlle. Hulot. Moreover, it is supposed to have been reported to the First Consul that he had publicly expressed some very unflattering opinions about the female members of the Bonaparte family. The situation was complicated, after Moreau's marriage, by the long-standing feud which appears to have existed between Josephine and his mother-in-law. An angry scene between the two women was narrowly averted when, at Nôtre Dame, at the service held to celebrate the signing of the *Concordat*, Madame Hulot took possession of the seats which had been reserved for Madame Bonaparte.²

Nevertheless, it is unlikely that in 1802, when Fauche arrived in Paris, Moreau had as yet engaged in any conspiracy against Bonaparte. Unquestionably, those officers who considered that they had cause to complain of their treatment by the First Consul were always welcome at Grosbois, the estate near

¹ Moreau appears to have succeeded in amassing what, in the circumstances, may be described as a large fortune. One of the reasons of the discontent of many of the generals was that Bonaparte was determined to put a stop to their financial irregularities.

² The question of the relations between Bonaparte and Moreau has been made the subject of a special study by Major Picard, *Bonaparte et Moreau*. For the causes of their quarrel, see pp. 287-296 and 335-351.

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Paris which he had bought from the ex-Director, Barras. It is probable, however, that he was content to pose as their friend, and cautiously refrained from actually participating in their plots. In his campaign of opposition he seems, in the first instance, to have adopted different tactics. While the Tuileries, the consular residence, assumed more and more the appearance of a Court, a strict republican simplicity was always observed at Grosbois. Nor was it only to his personal friends and acquaintances that Moreau manifested his real, or pretended, dislike to ceremony and display. Discarding his military uniform, the victor of Hohenlinden was rarely seen in public, except in the garb of an ordinary citizen. To the Legion of Honour, which the First Consul had recently instituted, he invariably alluded in the most disrespectful terms, and, on one occasion, for the amusement of his guests, he is said to have solemnly invested his dog with the new order. Bonaparte was so furiously incensed that he appears to have resolved to call him out. But Fouché, who was commissioned to carry a challenge to Grosbois, seems to have effected some kind of a reconciliation and to have persuaded Moreau to show himself at one of the consular *levées*.¹

From the time of his first visit to England, in 1798, down to the spring of 1801, Fauche appears to have been constantly employed by the British government. In a letter written by him to Lord Grenville from 7, Gerard Street, Soho, on January 18, 1801, only a little more than a month after the battle of Hohenlinden, is to be found the first suggestion that Moreau should be sounded about his intentions.² "He would not be afraid," wrote Fauche, "to lay before him proposals of the same nature as those he had

¹ Desmarest, *Quinze ans de haute police*, pp. 80-86.

² F. O. France 58, Fauche-Borel à Grenville, 18 Janvier, 1801.

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before addressed so successfully to his predecessor.”¹ But his offer was not entertained. Grenville, Pitt and Windham, were about to retire, and their successors had no thoughts, for the moment, of entering into schemes of that kind. Fauche’s services were, in consequence, dispensed with, and he found himself at liberty to return to Neufchatel, to his family and his long-neglected business. But, in the autumn, he was summoned to London by a letter from Mr. Flint, dated September 25, 1801.² On reporting himself at the Home Office, he was informed that it was improbable that the peace would endure for long, and that employment would soon be offered him. Nevertheless, no mission of importance was confided to him until the following June, when the task of bringing together Moreau and Pichegru was entrusted to him.

If Fauche’s account of these events may be believed, and grave doubts have been cast upon the truth of his story, he experienced, on arriving in Paris, no difficulty in seeing Moreau, who, when he learnt the nature of his business, spoke most sympathetically of Pichegru. Referring to the Klinglin correspondence, he told him of Desaix’s letter, and gave him the explanation of his conduct in that affair, which has been quoted in a former chapter.³ With regard to the course which Pichegru should follow in the future, he advised him to remain in England, and not to think of returning to France, “except with a prince bearing in his hand the constitutional charter.” But, at the same time, he hinted that some development of that kind might not improbably take place before long. This was the only visit which Fauche was able to pay to Moreau. His presence in Paris having been brought to the notice of the police, he

¹ Pichegru.

² Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, II. p. 391.

³ V. p. 285.

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was arrested on July 1, 1802, and imprisoned in the Temple.¹

The negotiation was, however, carried on by a certain Abbé David, who in former years had attached himself to Pichegru in Holland, and had written a most indifferent history of his campaigns. This man who had held a small diplomatic post, and had been employed in the department of military intelligence, had recently resumed his priestly duties. It would seem that he had always kept up a friendly correspondence with Pichegru, and, at his request, without doubt, he now undertook the task of effecting his reconciliation with Moreau. It may be regarded as certain that, during the year 1802, he constantly acted as their intermediary, laying before Moreau the letters which he received from Pichegru, and transmitting to Pichegru the messages and communications of Moreau.² But the police had received certain information, which led, in November, 1802, to his arrest, as he was on the point of going on board the Dover packet. After a brief detention at Calais, he was sent back to Paris, and joined Fauche in the Temple. But the documents found upon him tended merely to show that Moreau took a kindly interest in the endeavours of Pichegru's friends to obtain the revocation of his sentence of banishment. At his subsequent trial, David declared that the attainment of that harmless object was the sole purpose of his projected journey to England and of his other proceedings. It had never entered his mind that the two generals, having made up their differences, might combine together to overthrow Bonaparte. But, according to Fauche, he had contrived, at the time he was arrested, to secrete a letter which would have thrown a very different light upon the affair. This compromising document he was

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, III. pp. 3-22.

² *Procès de Georges*, etc.

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enabled to return to Moreau, eighteen months later, when the general was his fellow-prisoner in the Temple.¹

Meanwhile the brief peace of Amiens was rapidly drawing to an end. In England the conviction was strong that there could be no security so long as France were ruled by Bonaparte. Bonaparte himself is believed to have been anxious to postpone the rupture, until his naval preparations should be more advanced. At the same time, however, the restless spirit of many of the senior officers rendered it very desirable that he should find prompt employment for the army. But it is unnecessary in this volume to enter into the question as to whether the immediate responsibility for the renewal of the war should rest with Bonaparte or with the British government. Conditions, it is clear, were such that a conflict was bound to ensue. Nor, in these circumstances, is there any occasion to discuss the points involved in the dispute about Malta, which was the ostensible reason of the war officially declared by England, on May 16, 1803.

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, III. p. 36.

CHAPTER XIV

PLOT AND COUNTERPLOT

WHILE peace had endured, the British government had been content with watching the trend of public opinion in France and with taking note of those prominent persons, who seemed inclined to resent Bonaparte's assumption of the supreme power. But this attitude was abandoned from the moment that the war was renewed. Once hostilities broke out afresh, practical steps were taken for making use of the information which had been acquired during the truce. It was well known in London that there was disaffection in the army, and that the most popular general in France was the bitter enemy of the First Consul. Whether or not the Abbé David were in direct communication with Downing Street, Pichegru himself, it may safely be assumed, kept the government informed of the progress of his negotiations with Moreau. Although there are but few references to him in contemporary documents, Pichegru's movements at this period may be traced with a reasonable degree of certainty. After his flight from Bayreuth, in 1801, and his return to England, he seems to have lived at Brompton in a house which he shared with his friend Jean Couchery, an ex-deputy of the Council of the 500, with whom he had escaped from Sinnamary. According to the spy, Mehée La Touche, to whose visit to London it will soon be necessary to refer, the few people whom he saw were

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chiefly English.¹ He, Couchery, Henri Larivière,² and Major Rusillion³ formed a little society apart and avoided the general body of their compatriots. But, while he thus appeared to stand aloof from the Bourbon princes and the *émigrés*, he was in reality in close and constant communication with Monsieur, who now resided in London.

It may be accepted as certain that Monsieur, Pichegru and Georges were the chief contrivers of the great plot of 1804. Nor, in spite of official denials, can it be doubted that their schemes were brought to maturity under the sympathetic eye of the British government. It may be that Addington and, perhaps, Hawkesbury had no direct knowledge of the affair. But Hammond and Arbuthnot,⁴ the Under-Secretaries for Foreign Affairs, Flint, the Superintendent of Aliens, Yorke, the Secretary, and Huskisson, the Under-Secretary-at-War, were unquestionably privy to the designs of the conspirators. Wickham, it will be observed, is not included among those who were, doubtless, concerned in the plot. At the peace, in 1802, he had returned to England, but had at once been appointed Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. The conspiracy in its essential features was simply a reproduction of Hyde de Neuville's and Georges' plans in 1800. Bonaparte was to be made away with and the army was to be induced to declare for a restoration of the monarchy. But in one important particular the plot of 1803-1804 differed from the one hatched at the time of Marengo. In the new conspiracy Georges himself was to execute the *coup essentiel*, and for that

¹ Mehée La Touche, *Alliance des Jacobins et du ministère anglais*.

² Larivière, Henry (1761-1838). One of the few members of the convention who professed monarchical opinions. Member of the council of the 500 marked down for deportation on 18 *fructidor*. Escaped to Switzerland.

³ V. P. 162. When the French invaded Switzerland in 1798 he was arrested and suffered an imprisonment in the Temple.

⁴ *Paget Papers*, II. pp. 96-98.

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purpose was to proceed to Paris with a few tried companions.

In the previous war, correspondence between England and France had been chiefly carried on from Jersey. But the fishermen and smugglers of Boulogne and Calais appear to have been always ready to take passengers and letters from one country to the other. It was in a Boulogne fishing boat that Hyde de Neuville and Georges had crossed the channel, in the spring of 1800. But when the war was renewed, in 1803, steps were at once taken for establishing a direct line of communication with Paris by way of Dieppe. Captain Wright, who, under the Directory had been imprisoned in, and had escaped from, the Temple with Sidney Smith, was selected by the Admiralty for the execution of this service,¹ and it was he who was entrusted with the task of conveying Georges and a first batch of conspirators to France. On all occasions of this kind a landing was effected between Dieppe and Le Tréport, at a point where the smugglers had cut out a rude path, enabling the cliffs to be scaled with the assistance of a rope. Here, on the night of August 23, 1803, Georges disembarked and surmounting the difficulties of the ascent, no light undertaking for a very stout man, in due course reached Paris. Before leaving London, some person in authority, probably Flint, had supplied him with money to a considerable amount. According to his nephew and biographer, he carried in his belt, when he landed at Biville, no less than £40,000 in bills and letters of exchange. No credence, however, can be attached to this assertion, seeing that it is followed by the absurd statement that Mr. Pitt,² in handing them over to him, stipulated that Bonaparte should not be killed, but should be taken alive and brought to England with a view to his

¹ Admiralty 2/1861, Nepean to Admiral Montague, July 31, 1803.

² Mr. Pitt was not in office.

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eventual removal to St. Helena.¹ All that can be said with certainty about the amount of money given to Georges is that, when he was arrested six months later, rather more than £2,000 were found in his possession.² Among the seven men who accompanied him to Paris was a certain Querelle, a village doctor, to whom it will be necessary to refer later.

For the next several months Georges remained hidden in Paris. At his trial little evidence was produced to show how he spent his time at this period. It would seem that, having entered the town in a yellow gig,³ driven by the heretofore Marquis d'Hozier, disguised as a coachman, he went, in the first instance, to the *Cloche d'Or*, an inn in the Rue du Bac much frequented by the *Chouans*. But his stay there was of brief duration. Some six weeks earlier, one Bouvet de Lozier had, through the agency of his mistress, Madame de Saint-Leger, hired a small house on the banks of the Seine at Chaillot. It has been suggested that the conspirators intended that it should serve to shelter Monsieur, or one of the princes, whom they hoped would soon join them in Paris. Be that as it may, Georges appears to have stayed there during the greater part of September. His next move was to a retreat in the centre of the town. It appears that d'Hozier could command the services of a carpenter, named Spein, who was always ready to construct, under the pretence of executing some necessary repairs, a hiding-place in the floor or in the wall of any room. Thus the house in the Rue Carême-Prenant, to which Georges repaired, had been provided with a trap-door to enable him to escape, at the first alarm, through a neighbouring shop into the street. Similar contrivances existed in other houses used by the

¹ G. de Cadoudal, *Georges Cadoudal*, p. 296.

² *Procès de Georges*, etc.

³ This fact was extracted from his servant, Louis Picot.

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conspirators,¹ a second party of whom were safely landed by Captain Wright at the foot of the cliffs at Biville, about the middle of December.

While Georges lay in Paris occupied solely, as far as can be judged, in collecting a select body of followers, the correspondence between Moreau and Pichegru was reopened. After the arrest of the Abbé David, who still remained untried in the Temple, the task which he had assumed was undertaken by the retired general, Lajolais. In an early chapter, it was mentioned that Madame Lajolais was generally believed to have been Pichegru's mistress. Whether or not that were the case, he was unquestionably on very friendly terms, while at Strasburg, both with this woman and her husband. Nevertheless, no grounds exist for thinking that he ever confided to either of them the secret of his treasonable relations with Condé and Wickham. After the 18 *fructidor*, however, Lajolais, although no reference to him could be found in the Klinglin papers, was imprisoned along with Badonville, Demougé, the spy, and the other persons mentioned in those documents. After a long detention they were, in the last days of the Directory, brought before a Court Martial, which being presided over by a secret Royalist,² pronounced all of them not guilty. Lajolais was a disreputable individual, but, unlike Badonville and his companions, he was, doubtless, innocent of the particular charge of treason preferred against him on that occasion. It would seem that he was only prosecuted because he had been denounced by Moreau to the Directory as a suspicious character.³ But, although he owed it to Moreau that he had been held a prisoner in the Temple for twenty-eight months, that circumstance did not prevent him

¹ *Procès de Georges*, etc.

² General Desnoyers.

³ This accusation was made in the letter written by Moreau to Barthélemy (V. p. 233) on the subject of the Klinglin papers.

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from soliciting his good offices in the summer of 1803.

Shortly after the rupture of the Peace of Amiens, Lajolais appears to have called on Moreau, and requested him to obtain employment for him as he was in very straitened circumstances. On this occasion, he gave him a letter from Pichegru, urging him to use whatever influence he might possess to help his unfortunate friend, Lajolais. As regards that matter, Moreau appears to have declared that his relations with the First Consul were such that he could not ask him for favours on anybody's behalf. But Pichegru's letter led naturally to some conversation about Pichegru himself. According to the story told by Moreau at his trial, he merely said that, while he strongly disapproved of Pichegru's past conduct, he should be glad to see him included in the amnesty, and allowed to return to France. At the same time, he pointed out that it would, doubtless, facilitate matters were he to leave England, and take up his abode in Germany, or some other neutral country. But, if Lajolais may be believed, and subsequent events seem to confirm the truth of his statement, he, also, declared that he should much like to see Pichegru in person. Moreau, however, always denied that he had expressed any desire to that effect. Be that as it may, Lajolais, after his visit to Moreau, unquestionably prepared for a journey to London. But his departure was delayed for want of money, and, when he did start, he went first to Hamburg and then to Denmark before taking ship for England. Moreover, he took the precaution of travelling under a false name, and in the character of a German merchant.¹

Lajolais does not appear to have reached England until the second week of December, 1803. A strict

¹ *Procès de Georges*, etc. First statement of Lajolais to Réal. Examination of 25 *pluviose*.

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Aliens Act was in force, but his arrival was expected, and the port authorities at Harwich had orders to allow him to proceed upon his journey to London. When, some months later, he was placed upon his trial, he admitted that he had gone to England to endeavour to induce Pichegru to comply with Moreau's request and return with him to Paris. But, while he acknowledged that, during the three weeks which he spent in London, he was constantly in Pichegru's company, he stoutly denied that any question of overthrowing Bonaparte had been the subject of their conversations. It was true that on one occasion, when at Brompton, he had exchanged some remarks with a visitor whom he did not know, but who, Couchery afterwards informed him, was the Comte d'Artois. The Prince, on taking leave, uttered some words to the effect that, if the two generals could only agree, he should not be long in joining them in France. But he protested that he did not know to whom this remark referred, and had not liked to ask Pichegru to enlighten him, because he was so reserved and secretive.¹

According to the *acte d'accusation* at the trial of the conspirators, in 1804, Pichegru was induced to go to France by Lajolais' account of Moreau's dispositions, and by his description of the state of affairs in Paris. It is hardly possible to doubt that the theory of the prosecution was in the main correct. Nevertheless, it was supported by no direct evidence, but rested entirely upon conjecture, and upon the admissions of the prisoners themselves. The English records and documents throw little light upon the subject: Had Windham been in office, the particular diary, from which so many extracts have been quoted in this narrative, would, doubtless, have contained entries of surpassing interest. But he had retired with Pitt and Grenville, and those ministers and officials who were,

¹ *Procès de Georges*, Lajolais' declaration of the 27 *pluviose*.

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seemingly, in relation with the conspirators appear to have been careful to avoid committing themselves on paper. It cannot, however, be questioned for a moment that they encouraged Pichegru to proceed upon his fatal journey. Lord Keith's orders exclude the possibility of doubt upon that point. In a letter marked *Most secret*, and dated January 9, 1804, the admiral was informed that it had "been judged advisable that an officer of rank and consideration should be landed in France as soon as possible, and that it was of great importance to His Majesty's government that he should not fall into the hands of the enemy." He was, therefore, desired to order a frigate or large sloop to receive him, and to land him and any persons, who might accompany him, on such a part of the coast as he might point out.¹

That Lajolais brought promises and assurances of some kind to Brompton cannot be doubted for a moment. It may be that he led Pichegru to think that Moreau was more favourably disposed to the cause of the monarchy than he was in reality. In any case it is probable that he conveyed to him a very false idea of that general's influence and power, and, at the same time, either deliberately or from ignorance, greatly underestimated the strength of Bonaparte's position. But, if it be impossible to speak with certainty about the precise reason which induced Pichegru to embark upon his expedition to Paris, the motives of the British government in assisting him to carry out his intention are easy to fathom. It must be borne in mind that the most formidable army ever yet seen in Europe was assembling at Boulogne, with the avowed purpose of invading England. Not only in England, but in France, it was generally believed that the attempt to cross the Channel might be made at any moment, and that the expedition would be

¹ Admiralty 1/4953, Nepean to Keith, January 9, 1804.

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commanded by Bonaparte in person. With the fear of invasion before their eyes, ministers could hardly fail to congratulate themselves that Georges and a determined gang of conspirators should be concealed in Paris, ready to take action at the first favourable moment. Perhaps the *Chouan* leader only remained so quiet, during so many months, because he daily hoped to hear that the expedition had started, and that Bonaparte had either been killed or wounded. It can scarcely excite surprise that, under such conditions, those members of the government who were concerned with these affairs should applaud Pichegru's resolution of going to Paris. Even if some of them may have doubted whether a working alliance could ever be brought about between the *Chouans* and the discontented Republican officers, they probably refrained from expressing their fears to him. It was sufficient for them that his project promised to raise up immediate embarrassments for Bonaparte. Whether ultimately it should prove successful was, doubtless, regarded as a consideration of quite secondary importance.

Pichegru left London, on January 10, 1804, and, making the journey to Deal in a post-chaise in the company of Lajolais and Captain Wright, went on board the sloop, *Vincejo*.¹ Their companions, who either preceded them or followed them to Deal, were men for the most part of far higher social standing than those whom Wright had conveyed to Biville, on two former occasions. Besides Lajolais and Pichegru himself the party consisted of Major Rusillion, the ex-Swiss guardsman, Monsieur's aide-de-camp, the Marquis de Rivière, and the brothers Polignac one of whom, the Comte Jules, was destined, as minister of

¹ *Procès de Georges*, etc. Lajolais' declaration of 27 *pluviose*. H.M.S. *Vincejo*, 18 gun brig sloop, 277 tons, 51 effective men and 24 boys (W. James, *Naval History*, III. pp. 218-220).

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Charles X.¹ to bring about, in 1830, the downfall of the restored monarchy. One or two persons of lesser importance completed the list of Captain Wright's passengers. The next day, January 11, the *Vincejo* sailed, but, being delayed by contrary winds, only arrived off Biville on the 16th. That night, the whole party landed and scaling the cliffs were led by a guide to the farm of La Poterie, where they were greeted by Georges, who had come from Paris to meet them.

To enable them to gain Paris unobserved, the conspirators, many months before, had marked out certain routes, known as *lignes de correspondance*. Thus it was possible for parties from England to reach the capital, without entering an inn or other establishment of that kind. At intervals of six or ten miles, houses, termed *maisons de confiance*, generally isolated farms or the *châteaux* of friendly *ci-devants*, were at their disposal. It seems to have been their practice to lie concealed during the day at these houses, and at night to proceed a further stage upon their journey, under the guidance of their late host or of some person to whose care he would confide them. It was in this manner that Pichegru travelled to Paris. On arriving at La Poterie, his party seems to have broken up into two groups to each of which a different route was assigned. Pichegru, Georges, Rusillion and Georges' servant, Picot, kept together and made their way by night, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, or in a carriage, from one *maison de confiance* to another. A few particulars about their journey were afterwards elicited by the police from the servant, Picot, by a resort to methods which will be described in due course. Pichegru was, he stated, always addressed as M. Charles. Both he and Rusillion wore green great-coats somewhat the worse for wear and all of them

¹ Monsieur, the Comte d'Artois, succeeded his brother, Louis XVIII., in 1825, and took the title of Charles X.

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carried pistols. The last stage was performed by Pichegru and Georges alone in a gig. They entered Paris, on January 23, 1804, by the Porte Saint-Denis and drove to a house in the Rue du Puits-de-l'Hermite, near the Jardin des Plantes, the owner of which had placed his second floor at their disposal.¹

In the meantime, Lajolais, who had travelled by a different road had arrived, and had at once apprised Moreau that Pichegru was in Paris. The first meeting of the two generals seems to have taken place upon the Boulevard de la Madeleine, at nine o'clock of the evening of January 25. At the trial of these men the prosecution contended, on the strength of Lajolais' admissions and of Bouvet de Lozier's so-called "spontaneous declaration," that Georges, Lajolais, and Bouvet were all present at their interview. Moreau, however, always denied that he had ever met Pichegru by appointment in the street. After having, in the first instance, declared to the investigating magistrate that he had never seen him at all, he was forced to admit that he had twice received him at his house. But it was only on account of their former intimate relations, and in deference to the solicitations of certain of their common friends that he had consented to see him. Moreover, he maintained that, on these two occasions, the only business discussed between them was the question of the repeal of the decree of banishment pronounced against him by the Directory. With regard to Georges, he asserted emphatically that he was unaware of his presence in Paris and had never spoken to him nor even seen him, either upon the boulevard or in any other place.

It is obvious that little weight can be attached to the assertions of men in the situation of Moreau, Lajolais and Bouvet, and it was not in the power of

¹ *Procès de Georges, etc. 2^{me} Interrogatoire de Louis Picot, 27 pluviöse.*

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the prosecution to call any independent witnesses. The only account of a person not being on trial for his life, who had a first-hand knowledge of these events, is the report which a certain M. Jolclerc rendered to the British government in June, 1804.¹ Enclosed with his narrative is a letter from Couchery, who, before Pichegru's departure for France, had shared with him the house at Brompton. Jolclerc is therein recommended to Hammond as an honest man "proscribed and compelled to fly from France, because of his relations with the unfortunate General Pichegru." The report, unquestionably, reads like a true and faithful account of events drawn up by one who had been closely connected with the principal conspirators. Nevertheless, it is an established fact that this Jolclerc, who came to England after the failure of the plot, and passed himself off so successfully as a man who had been persecuted on account of his friendly relations with Pichegru, was one of the most crafty agents of Bonaparte's secret police. A letter which he wrote to his Imperial master, in 1812, was, a few years ago, discovered and published by M. Léonce Grasilier. In it Jolclerc recalls to Bonaparte's recollection that it was he who "gathered together all the threads of Moreau's and Pichegru's conspiracy and enabled the chief culprits to be arrested." Furthermore, he states distinctly that he went to London and obtained intelligence which was regarded as highly valuable, "exposing himself, not to a few hours of glorious peril upon the battle-field, but to the danger of an ignominious death for many months at a time."²

Even so, it is possible that there may be more truth in Jolclerc's report than in Bouvet's "spontaneous

¹ F. O. France 70, particulars relating to General Pichegru received June 11, 1804.

² L. Grasilier, *Par qui fut livré le General Pichegru?* p. 12.

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declaration," Lajolais' admissions and Moreau's explanations. He was guilty of no exaggeration when he reminded Bonaparte that his visit to London, in 1804, was a most hazardous undertaking. Probably his life, most certainly his liberty, depended upon his skill in deceiving men who, like Couchery, had lived in the closest intimacy with the conspirators. Ministers, as will presently be related, had been recently imposed upon by a French spy and were still smarting under the ridicule to which they had been exposed by Bonaparte. In such circumstances, it must have gone hard with Joliclerc, had he been denounced to them as a person seeking to emulate the achievements of the impudent Mehée. Obviously, therefore, he was obliged to draw up his report in such a manner as not to excite the suspicions of Couchery and others, who were conversant with many of the details of the events which had taken place in Paris. Clearly, also, it was desirable to insert into it certain particulars which, although perfectly well known to those who had been concerned in the plot, had not been revealed to the public at the trial.¹ For that reason Joliclerc's narrative is not a document which should be lightly discarded. It will soon be necessary, however, again to refer to this man and to his proceedings.

According to Joliclerc, Moreau and Pichegru met on five different occasions. Their first interview took place on the Boulevard de la Madeleine, and was followed, the next day, by a second meeting at which Pichegru presented Georges to Moreau and unfolded his plans for the "overthrow of the tyrant." It would seem that Moreau took exception to certain parts of this scheme and was, moreover, displeased at thus finding himself in the presence of the notorious Georges. The political object which he had in view has always

¹ The trial of Moreau, Georges and the other conspirators had just taken place when Joliclerc arrived in London.

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been a subject of controversy. In the opinion of certain writers he was a sincere republican, whose only object was to preserve his country from the despotism of Bonaparte. On the other hand, it has been maintained that he entered into the conspiracy with the sole idea of himself assuming dictatorial powers. But, whether either of these theories be correct, or whether, as Joliclerc's report suggests, he cared little what might happen, provided only that Bonaparte could be overthrown, it may readily be believed that he disliked the notion of associating with the contriver of the horrible plot of the 3 *nivose*. At their third interview, which was also attended by Georges, Moreau's attitude was still more unsatisfactory. While agreeing that "the tyrant" must be overthrown, he argued that the Senate alone could decide as to the form which the government should take. At the same time, he intimated that, in the interval between the downfall of Bonaparte and the establishment of the new order of affairs, he should expect to be invested with the supreme power. This suggestion aroused Pichegru's suspicion, and was, doubtless, the reason of his remark about Moreau's ambition and his absurd pretensions to govern, which was reproduced at the trial.

Pichegru, however, was in close relations with General Macdonald who, if Joliclerc's story be true, was deeply implicated in the plot. In the official report of the proceedings, taken against the conspirators, the name of Macdonald is never mentioned. But Bonaparte's treatment of him tends to confirm the accuracy of Joliclerc's statement. Notwithstanding his distinguished record of service, Macdonald was not employed, but was maintained in a kind of disgrace from 1804 until 1809, and it is notorious that Bonaparte never ceased to regard him with suspicion. Seemingly, it was by the advice of

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Macdonald that Pichegru went to his next meeting with Moreau, unaccompanied by Georges. At this, their fourth interview, Moreau proved far more tractable. Abandoning all his former pretensions both about the dictatorship and the part to be reserved for the Senate, he agreed that the downfall of "the tyrant" should be the signal for the immediate proclamation of the monarchy. At their fifth and last conference, all the details of the affair were settled, and it was resolved that, in the event of it being considered necessary to deliver their projected blow before the arrival of the prince, a provisional government should be set up composed of Generals Pichegru, Moreau, and Macdonald.

While arranging these matters with Moreau, Pichegru had, so Joliclerc relates, entered into communication with several generals who had served under him in former days. His conversations with these officers to whom, however, he did not fully disclose his plans, satisfied him that their hatred of Bonaparte was undiminished. At the same time, he made known his presence in Paris to his brother, a priest leading a very retired life. According to Joliclerc, it was Lajolais who persuaded him to take that step. Whether or not that be the case, the Abbé was, doubtless, never admitted into the secret of the plot. It is probable that he really believed that his brother was only hiding in Paris, because negotiations were on foot to enable him openly to return to France, and that, until that business could be settled, he was obliged to remain concealed. Although Joliclerc says that Pichegru and Moreau met for the first time upon the Boulevard de la Madeleine, he omits to mention where their subsequent interviews took place. At his trial, however, Moreau did not deny having twice received Pichegru at his house in the Rue d'Anjou, and it is probable that other conferences were held

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there besides those which he acknowledged took place.

It is an undoubted, although almost surprising, fact that, up to the end of January, 1804, Bonaparte had no idea that Georges and his myrmidons were in Paris, and that Pichegru was, also, in the town and in daily communication with Moreau. This circumstance should, presumably, be attributed to the abolition of the ministry of police. In the Senate, Fouché had opposed him in the question of consulship for life, and Bonaparte, in consequence, had determined to deprive him of the power which he exercised as Minister of Police. But, realizing the ability and the craft of the man with whom he had to deal, he had not considered it advisable summarily to dismiss him from his post. To attain his purpose, he had made the peace with England, in 1802, a pretext for abolishing his office altogether, and for decreeing that, in future, the police would be placed under the charge of the *Grand Juge*, as the Minister of Justice was entitled. When the war broke out afresh, the same system was maintained, with the result that at no period of Bonaparte's rule were the police so inefficient.

Fouché accepted the situation without complaint. Doubtless, he felt confident that circumstances would, before long, necessitate his reinstatement. In the meanwhile, he remained on excellent terms with Bonaparte, for whom he is believed, during this period of his retirement, to have carried out certain private investigations behind the backs of the official police.¹ It is more than probable that it was he who, in the first instance, inspired Mehée La Touche with the idea of entrapping the British government into some compromising transactions. Mehée was a journalist who, in early revolutionary days, had been associated with Danton, and had been concerned in the September

¹ Madelin, *Fouché*, I. p. 357.

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massacres. Like most politicians, who had survived the Reign of Terror, he had changed his opinions to meet different emergencies. But, under the Directory, he had consistently supported the Left and, after the 18 *brumaire*, had edited a newspaper, secretly subsidized by Fouché for the purpose of combating the reactionary tendencies of Bonaparte.¹ Nevertheless, in spite of his connection with the Minister of Police, he had been included among the persons arbitrarily condemned to deportation after the gunpowder plot of the 3 *nivose*. Bonaparte, it will be remembered, had imputed that attempt upon his life to the Jacobins, and had maintained his intention of deporting the most prominent of them, even when Fouché had shown conclusively that the Royalists alone were responsible for it. Accordingly, early in the year, 1801, more than a hundred of these persons were taken to Oléron, and kept in confinement with the prospect before them of being removed to Cayenne, or to some other penal colony. But Mehée, after enduring about a year's detention, escaped and returned to Paris. A week later, he set out for Guernsey, where he proposed making a short stay before proceeding to London, his ultimate destination.

On arriving at Guernsey, Mehée² introduced himself to the *émigrés* and the British officers of the garrison as a repentant Jacobin who, to atone for the past, intended to make use of his former friends to bring about a restoration of the monarchy. He, also, addressed communications to the same effect to the

¹ Madelin, *Fouché*, I. p. 277.

² The following account of Mehée's adventures is taken entirely from his pamphlet, published in 1804 by order of Bonaparte, entitled *L'Alliance des Jacobins avec le ministère anglais*. In *F. O. France* 70, under the title of *Secret Intelligence from France*, June 29, 1804, appears the following: "When Bonaparte ordered Mehée's pamphlet to be published he observed, *ces bougres d'Anglais verront que je suis plus fin qu'eux.*"

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British government and, to inspire confidence, transmitted a document purporting to set forth the French designs upon Egypt and Turkey, which, he pretended, he had abstracted from the Foreign Office. It is plain that his object in visiting Guernsey was to insinuate himself into the good graces of General Doyle, the governor, and Sir James de Saumarez, the admiral, in the hope that they would recommend him to their government as a person deserving of trust. Being a clever and entertaining man, he experienced little difficulty in establishing friendly relations with both these officers. But ministers, having recently concluded the Peace of Amiens, were not disposed to avail themselves of his offers of service, and, having exhausted his slender stock of money, he was unable to go to London to interview them in person. Experience had taught him, he relates, that Englishmen regarded temperate habits and a light purse with the utmost suspicion. By indulging freely in General Doyle's claret, he had won a high place in their estimation, and he was very anxious not to forfeit their good opinion by appearing before them in the light of a borrower. In this dilemma, he confided to Doyle that he had learnt quite recently that Bonaparte was engaged in devising the means of stirring up a rebellion in Ireland. Both the general and Sir James de Saumarez considered the news so serious, that they urged him at once to proceed to London and lay his facts before the government. Mehée assured them that he was ready to go, but that he must await the arrival of a remittance he was expecting from France. The Englishmen, however, declared that any delay might have dangerous consequences, and offered to advance him £20 to enable him to start forthwith. All difficulties being thus removed, Mehée set out the following day. It came as a disappointment to him, however, that, on cooler reflection, General Doyle and the admiral

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decided that £10 would be sufficient to defray the expenses of his journey. Their estimate proved singularly correct. When he reached London he had no more than eighteen shillings in his pocket.

Mehée arrived on a Saturday and found that, in accordance with the prevailing fashion, all the members of the government were out of town. "No one," he observes, "would presume to disturb a British minister in the country, even if it were a question of saving the United Kingdom from destruction." But, on the following Monday, he contrived to see Hammond, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Hammond, whom he describes as a disagreeable person of ugly appearance, was inclined to be suspicious. After listening to his story, he began himself to talk so volubly that it was some time before Mehée could interpose to explain that he understood no English. This remark proved singularly unfortunate. In a great state of indignation, Hammond replied that he had been speaking French the whole time. After this outburst, he was dismissed with the promise that his papers would be shown to Lord Hawkesbury, who would decide whether he could be employed. When summoned to the Foreign Office, a few days later, he found Hammond in a more genial frame of mind. But the news which he had to impart to him was most disappointing. "Being still at peace with France" the government, although grateful to him, could not accept his proffered services. But, as circumstances might change, a note would be made of his address. Mehée, however, was not in a position to wait for long. By taking all his meals at the hotel in Parliament Street, to which he had repaired on his arrival, he might continue to exist for a time without money. But the day must soon come when his landlord's patience would be exhausted. In the meantime, his only hope lay in Bertrand de Moleville, a former minister of Louis XVI., who had the ear of

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the government in London. Having rendered him some service in old days, he presented himself to him, and, repeating the story he had recently told to Hammond, asked him to help him. As a convert to Royalist opinions, Bertrand received him cordially, expressing the warmest admiration for his plan of making his former friends, the Jacobins, the instruments of a monarchical restoration. But at the first mention of Mehée's pecuniary distress, he declared his inability to assist him. At last, having staved off the evil day for nearly three months, Mehée was arrested at the suit of his landlord and lodged in a sponging-house. Fortunately for him, however, he had only been a prisoner a few days, when the news arrived that, in Paris, Lord Whitworth had asked for his passports and that war was inevitable.

The outbreak of war brought about an immediate change in Mehée's fortunes. Bertrand de Moleville arrived at his place of detention, settled his debts, gave him £50 and told him that the British government was prepared to allow him £10 *per* month. Shortly afterwards, he was informed that he would be sent to France on an important mission. His plan had been submitted to the Cabinet,¹ all the honourable members of which, when it was read to them, shouted "Goddam" in a body and declared that "he was a very clever fellow." His instructions were to be given him by Bertrand de Moleville, in order that the British government might not be involved in any difficulties which might befall him in France. These instructions, when in due course he received them, were merely to the effect that he was "to concert with his friends, measures for overthrowing the existing government in

¹ Under the date of June 5, 1804, Malmesbury speaks of the government having received "a very good memorial from a Frenchman of the name of La Touche (Mehée called himself de la Touche), with a plan of attacking and molesting France, but Addington paid no attention to it" (*Malmesbury Diaries*, IV. p. 266).

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France, in order that the nation might have an opportunity of choosing the form of government the most calculated to ensure its happiness and tranquillity."

But more detailed directions were to be given him by Mr. Drake, the British minister at Munich, whom he was directed to visit on his way to France. He was to be allowed £700 for working and travelling expenses and a salary of £50 *per* month was to be paid to him. Accordingly, on September 22, 1803, he set out for Germany. He had been supplied with two passports, in one of which he was described as Count Jablowski, a noble Pole travelling for his pleasure, and in the other as Mehée, a Frenchman, expelled from England as a Jacobin.

Drake had been appointed British minister at Munich, when Bonaparte's conquest of northern Italy had compelled him to leave that country. In a former chapter, some account had been given of his relations with d'Antraigues, and of his proceedings while minister to the Republic of Genoa and the Court of Milan. As may be imagined from the extracts from it, already quoted, Drake is made to appear in a very ridiculous light in Mehée's narrative. It is probable that he was a vain man who considered himself very astute, whereas he was, in reality, very simple-minded. Mehée's description of the artifices by which he won his confidence need not be reproduced. Suffice it to say that he accomplished his purpose most effectually, and that, when he left Munich, he carried away with him not only precise instructions as to the objects to which he was to devote his attention in France, but, also, bills of exchange to a considerable amount to defray his own, and his agents', expenses. He was charged to spend money lavishly in fomenting disaffection in the army and in gathering intelligence of Bonaparte's military plans. In order to encompass the destruction of powder factories, he was recommended to

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cultivate relations with persons employed at those establishments. In the correspondence which he was expected to carry on regularly with Drake, certain false names, which had been agreed upon between them, and invisible ink were invariably to be used. Mehée, however, had been for some time past in communication with his government and, on arriving in Paris, at once deposited his instructions in the hands of the *Grand Juge*, from whom he learnt that his conduct had elicited from Bonaparte the pronouncement that he was "a good Frenchman." That eulogy, he assures his readers, was worth more to him than all the gold with which England rewards her hired assassins.¹

Henceforward, Mehée's correspondence with Drake was carried on under the direct supervision of Bonaparte.² Thus the too credulous minister was kept well supplied with misleading information about naval movements and the objects of the camp at Boulogne. A fictitious person, General K——, was, also, brought upon the scene and made to figure as a disaffected officer desirous of entering into relations with the enemy. To assist in the mystification, a Captain Rosey, from the garrison of Strasburg, was sent to Munich, where he presented himself to Drake as the aide-de-camp of the imaginary general. Rosey, also, paid a visit to Sir Sidney Smith's brother, Spencer Smith, who had lately been accredited to the Court of Stuttgart.³ Smith appears to have displayed no more discernment than Drake, and to have fallen with the same readiness into every trap which was laid for him.

It is an open question whether the consular police connived at Mehée's escape from Oléron, and whether they sent him to England as an *agent provocateur*.

¹ Mehée, *Alliance des Jacobins avec le ministère anglais*.

² *Correspondence de Napoleon I^{er}*, IX. pp. 73, 100, 216.

³ *2^{me} Rapport du Grand Juge*.

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He himself asserts that he embarked upon the expedition with the idea of rendering some service to the government and thereby obtaining permission to return to France. No document has ever been discovered connecting him with the official police at the time when he set out for Guernsey, and it may be strictly true that he was not yet in their employ. But, remembering that he was closely associated with Fouché, immediately before his removal to Oléron, it is hardly possible to believe that he did not take counsel of him, in the interval between his escape from prison and his departure for England, a period which he acknowledges he spent in Paris. Only a few months earlier, while Fouché was still Minister of Police, an individual had been enrolled among his spies, who may very well have suggested to him the idea of playing some kind of a trick upon the English government. It has been related that Wickham, while in Switzerland, had employed a certain Le Clerc as his secretary, in connection with his secret correspondence with France. When he and the members of his legation were recalled, Le Clerc accompanied them to England, where a post was found for him in the Alien Department presided over by Flint. In a letter to Hookham Frere, Flint¹ speaks of him as "a very honest creature devoted to the interests of the English government," to which, he goes on to say, "Monsieur and his friends all look upon him as sold." A little more than a year later, however, on August 25, 1801, possibly because it was evident that peace was about to be concluded, Le Clerc announced to Hammond his intention of returning to France and of devoting himself to the completion of the monumental work on Russia upon which he was engaged. He, therefore, asked that an interview might be granted him to enable him to discuss matters connected with his pension. He still hoped to be allowed to serve England,

¹ F. O. France 56, Flint to Frere, May 29, 1800.

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not that he had any intention of conspiring against his own country, but because he would be in an excellent situation for supplying the Foreign Office with information about the state of affairs in France. It would seem that Hammond must have answered to the effect that he need not trouble to call, as no intention existed of conferring a pension upon him. In any case, in his next letter, Le Clerc expresses his surprise and indignation at the contents of the communication which he had received the day before. Never could he have believed that a man who had faithfully served the British government could be treated so shabbily,¹ and, on his return to France, he gave practical expression to his dissatisfaction by placing his services at the disposal of Fouché. His affiliation to the police was followed so closely by Mehée's journey to Guernsey as to suggest that there may have been a near connection between the two events.²

Bonaparte had now in his possession a number of letters from Messrs. Drake and Spencer Smith upon which he could, when he chose, found a demand for their expulsion from the Courts to which they were accredited. Furthermore, he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had extracted about £10,000 from them, while supplying them with a quantity of false intelligence. Nevertheless, he was disappointed. England he felt sure was engaged upon some deep-laid scheme, but, as to the nature of it, he was still as completely in the dark as ever. Drake's correspondence threw no light upon it, and Mehée, while in London, had discovered nothing. So far as Pichegru was concerned, his observations tended to show that he lived

¹ F. O. France 58, Le Clerc to Hammond, August 25, 1801, August 29, 1801.

² Le Clerc's connection with the consular and imperial police is a well-established fact. He probably entered it in the first half of the year 1802. Mehée set out for Guernsey at the end of the same year. His escape from Oléron took place on 16 *Primaire an XI.* (December 7, 1802).

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apart from the *émigrés* and was not concerned in any designs against the French government. But from all sides, especially from Vienna, he was constantly receiving warnings that something was about to happen. Yet, although he urged the police to exercise redoubled vigilance, he could obtain no clue as to the direction from which danger was to be apprehended. In his perplexity he sent his aide-de-camp, Savary, the future Duc de Rovigo, on a mission of discovery to Brittany, but his report in no way diminished his anxiety. There was a restless feeling, related Savary, throughout the disaffected districts, engendered by the general expectation that some startling event would take place shortly. It was not until January 25, 1804, on the very day on which Moreau and Pichegru held their first meeting, that he conceived the plan which was to lead to the solution of the mystery.¹

Since the renewal of the war with England, a number of persons, most of whom had, at some time or another, been connected with the *Chouans*, had been arrested and charged with espionage and correspondence with the enemy. None of them, however, had as yet been brought to trial. But it was evident to Bonaparte that, if it were true that a serious plot were hatching, some of them must know something about it. He, accordingly, instructed the police to select five of these men for immediate trial, in the hope that to save their lives they would make revelations. The first two to be arraigned before the Military Court in the Rue des Capucines were condemned and died without flinching, the same afternoon. The next two were acquitted; but the fifth man, Querelle, the heretofore village doctor, who, in the previous August, had landed

¹ Rovigo, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 18-22. Castanié, *Indiscretions d'un préfet de police*, pp. 55-57. (These indiscretions were published originally in 1880.) The indiscreet *préfet* was no less a person than Réal.

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with Georges at Biville, was found guilty. He had been denounced by a creditor as a spy, and, at the time, little importance seems to have been attached to his arrest. He was, apparently, only included among those sent for trial because, to the experienced eyes of the police, he bore the appearance of a man who would be likely to turn informer. It was probably not entirely by accident that he was the last to be brought before the Court, and that, after he had heard his sentence, a whole night was allowed him in which to meditate upon the situation. The next morning, as the appointed hour drew near, the jailers, perceiving that his courage was rapidly giving way, removed him to another cell on the ground-floor, from which he must necessarily see and hear all the different preparations which were going on. Thus he was a terrified spectator of the departure of the battalion which was to furnish the firing party and assist at his execution. At the same time, he could see the mounted escort waiting in the yard to conduct him to the plain of Grenelle and the cab, in which he was to perform his last journey, drive up to the prison door. But, before he was summoned to take his seat in it, his fortitude broke down completely, and he begged that some one in authority might be sent for to listen to an important statement which he had to make.

When Réal, the lawyer and Councillor of State, whom Bonaparte had lately entrusted with the superintendence of police affairs, arrived at the Abbaye, he found Querelle in so abject a state of terror that brandy had to be administered to him before he could speak intelligibly. But, once assured that his life would be spared, provided he would make a frank statement, he proceeded to confess all he knew. He related how he and several other men had landed at Biville with Georges ; how they had travelled to Paris, and, as far as he was able, described the different

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maisons de confiance at which they had stopped. All of them, he admitted, had returned to France for the purpose of making away with Bonaparte. But, having been in prison for the last several months, he could not say where Georges was hiding at the present time. Nevertheless, he expressed his conviction that he was somewhere in the town. From the Abbaye Réal hurried off to the Tuileries to communicate to the First Consul the unwelcome intelligence that, unknown to the police, Georges and his gang had been in Paris for the last six months.¹ Once Bonaparte was apprised of the true state of affairs, prompt measures were taken for dealing with the situation. Savary² and fifty picked *gendarmes* in plain clothes were despatched in post-chaises to Biville to intercept a further batch of conspirators, whose arrival, Querelle had declared, was expected. At the same time Querelle himself, escorted by a body of policemen, was set to work to point out the various houses at which he and his companions had lodged on their journey from the coast, while a strict search was instituted in Paris for Georges and his associates, and, before many days were over, two important captures were effected.

Acting, without doubt, on information derived from Querelle the police, on February 7, 1804, paid a visit to the *Cloche d'Or*, which, it has already been mentioned, was a favourite house of call of the *Chouans*. Here they arrested a man whom, with the assistance of the informer, they identified as Louis Picot, Georges' servant. Any person who reads the official report of the judicial proceedings cannot fail to be struck by the remarkable change which came over this man, in the short interval between his first, and his second, appearance before the investigating

¹ F. Castanié, *Indiscretions*, etc., pp. 62-65.

² Rovigo, *Mémoires*, II. pp. 27-29.

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magistrate.¹ On the first occasion, he was defiant, and resolutely denied having seen his master during the last four months. But, the next day, his attitude was submissive, and he made some important admissions. The official documents make no attempt to account for this sudden alteration in his demeanour. But at his trial Picot explained matters, and his statement is confirmed by the confidential report of Thuriot, the magistrate who examined him.² It being clear that he must know a great deal more about Georges' recent movements than he was prepared to reveal, the authorities decided that he must be made to speak. Accordingly, on his return to prison, after his first appearance before the examining magistrate, he was taken into the guard-room, where 1500 *louis d'or* having been counted out before his eyes, he was told that he might have them, provided he would give the desired information. Prior to his association with the *Chouans* Picot had been a post-boy at L'Orient, and, doubtless, never in his life before had seen so large a sum of money. Nevertheless, he unhesitatingly declined to accept the proffered bribe. Other measures were, in consequence, adopted. It would seem that an effectual thumbscrew can be improvised with the hammer of a musket and a screw-driver. Picot, however, although that instrument was applied to him remorselessly, refused to divulge his secret. But, when in the last resort, the soles of his feet were exposed to the fire, the exquisite agony overcame his determination to remain silent.

Thus the police obtained a description of Georges' appearance and of his habitual style of dress. Furthermore, they learnt that he had recently lodged at Chaillot, in the Rue Carême-Prenant and in the Rue du Puits-de-l'Hermite. But, although they at once

¹ *Procès de Georges, etc.* 1^{re} interrogatoire de Louis Picot 19 pluviôse 1^{re} déclaration de Louis Picot 20 pluviôse.

² Quoted by M. Lenotre in *Tournebut*, p. 36.

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visited the houses indicated by Picot, they failed to secure him. But, while Picot was being subjected to the torture, an important capture had been effected in the Rue-Saint-Sauveur. Here, at the house of his mistress, Madame de Saint Leger, Bouvet de Lozier, who had been instrumental in hiring the villa at Chaillot, was arrested. He, also, after having in the first instance denied all knowledge of the plot, and having refused to impart any information, became suddenly communicative. According to the official report, his change of disposition was brought about in the following manner. On the night of February 13-14, he made an attempt to hang himself in his cell, but was cut down by a jailer before his purpose was fully accomplished. Thereupon, finding himself restored to life, he delivered himself of a "spontaneous declaration."¹ Whether that be the true explanation of his conduct is, however, very doubtful. The language of the declaration, it must be admitted, is hardly that which a man in his supposed condition would be expected to use. Some writers have, therefore, suggested that the story of his attempted suicide should be altogether rejected, and have emitted the opinion that he was either tortured or threatened with torture. Others consider that he endeavoured to hang himself after, not before, Réal had induced him to make revelations. But, whatever the real facts of the case may be, it was, undoubtedly, from Bouvet that the police first learnt of Lajolais' visit to London, of Pichegru's presence in Paris, and of his conferences with Moreau. Nor were they slow in acting upon their information. Lajolais was promptly secured at his apartment in the Rue Culture-Sainte-Catherine, where he was known by the name of Levasseur; and, on February 15, 1804, Moreau himself was arrested and lodged in the Temple.

¹ *Procès de Georges, etc. 1^{er} interrogatoire de Bouvet de Lozier, déclaration spontanée de Bouvet de Lozier.*

CHAPTER XV

THE TRAGEDY IN THE TEMPLE

WHILE he had been conferring with Moreau, Pichegru frequently changed his place of abode. After staying for a few days in the Rue du Puits-de-l'Hermite, both he and Georges, on January 28, moved to the villa at Chaillot. It was afterwards elicited at the trial that, during his stay there, the house was visited by several of the chief conspirators. According to the statement of Armand de Polignac,¹ who was an inmate of the villa for one night, Moreau himself came there and had a long consultation with Pichegru and Georges. It was at Chaillot that the conspirators learnt that Querelle had been reprieved, and that he had made important disclosures to the police. Georges, however, while expressing a pious wish that the man were dead, affected to treat the matter with indifference, declaring that, as he knew none of their hiding-places, he could do them little harm.² Nevertheless, a day or two later a change of quarters was considered advisable. Thus Georges returned to the house in the Rue du Puits-de-l'Hermite, and, on February 5, Pichegru accepted the hospitality of a friend at the *Hotel du Cercle* in the Rue de la Loi.³

Among the persons who were aware of Pichegru's presence in Paris were two or three individuals whose

¹ *Procès de Georges, etc. 2^{me} interrogatoire d'Armand Heraclius Polignac.*

² *Ibid. 2^{me} interrogatoire de Louis Picot.*

³ Now Rue de Richelieu.

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participation in the plot seems to have been of a strictly limited character. Victor Couchery, the younger brother of the ex-deputy with whom Pichegru had lived at Brompton, was one of those whose connection with the conspiracy was of that nature. Not long before, he had been dismissed from a government office in which he was employed, because he was suspected of carrying on a correspondence with Pichegru in London. He always denied, however, that he had ever communicated with him directly. But he was obliged to admit that he knew that his letters to his brother would be read by the general. With Lajolais he was on very friendly terms, and he was one of the first persons to be informed of Pichegru's arrival in Paris. He seems to have followed the negotiations with Moreau with the keenest interest, and, on one occasion, he acknowledged that he and Lajolais accompanied Pichegru to the general's house in the Rue d'Anjou. Nevertheless, he seems to have had nothing to do with Georges and the *Chouans*, and sincerely to have deplored Pichegru's association with them. According to his own story, it was at his instigation that Lajolais suggested to their common friend, Henri Rolland, that he should place a room in his lodgings at the *Hotel du Cercle* at Pichegru's disposal.¹

Rolland, an army contractor, who had known Pichegru in former days in Alsace, readily complied with Lajolais' request. He afterwards pleaded in his defence that, when he consented to receive his compromising guest, he was under the impression that he was merely passing through Paris on his way to Germany. Seeing that he was on very friendly terms with Moreau, and that it was in his gig that Pichegru had driven to one of his conferences in the Rue d'Anjou, he could not deny that he knew that the

¹ *Procès de Georges, etc. Déclaration de Couchery 10 germinal.*

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two generals were in communication. He professed, however, to have thought at the time that Pichegru was simply endeavouring to prevail upon Moreau to support his application to be allowed to return to France. It came as a complete surprise to him, in the evening, when Pichegru confided to him that he was anxious to induce Moreau to enter into a Royalist plot. At Pichegru's earnest request he even consented to make certain overtures to him himself. But directly he broached the subject, Moreau expressed great unwillingness to join in any movement in favour of the Bourbons, "who had all behaved so ill." Nevertheless, he gave him to understand that he had a project in hand aiming at the overthrow of the existing consular government. Rolland was seriously alarmed, and, foreseeing trouble, pretended that he was called away to Lille on urgent business. Pichegru, however, spared him the necessity of leaving Paris by announcing, on the second day of his stay with him, that he proposed to depart and take up his abode with Lajolais in the Rue Culture-Sainte-Catherine.

Doubtless, Pichegru thought, and with good reason, that his room at Rolland's was unsafe. It appears that any one in the passage could see into it, either through a glass partition, or through the upper part of the door which was, also, of glass. His change of quarters took place only just in time. He had been observed reading in bed, as was his custom, and it had been reported to the authorities that Rolland had a visitor.¹ When, a few days later, Bouvet de Lozier made his "spontaneous declaration" the police perceived, from their spy's² description of him, that the stranger reading in bed bore a striking resemblance to Pichegru. They, accordingly, went to the *Hotel du*

¹ *Procès de Georges, etc. Interrogatoire de Rolland 29 pluviôse.*

² For which he received 3000 francs, v. F. Barbey. *La mort de Pichegru*, p. 96 (note).

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Cercle where, although they failed to find the man for whom they were seeking, they took Rolland into custody.

Meanwhile, Pichegru having quitted the *Hotel du Cercle* had taken up his residence with Lajolais. Whether he saw Moreau, during the six days which he spent in the Rue Culture-Sainte-Catherine, is uncertain. That he and Lajolais were beginning to feel very anxious cannot be doubted. The arrest of Picot and of Bouvet de Lozier, and the domiciliary visits at Chaillot and in the Rue Carême-Prenant were signs that the police were hot upon their track. On February 13, Pichegru, regarding it as unsafe any longer to remain in his present quarters, seems to have charged Couchery to find him another lodging. Couchery addressed himself to one Janson, an ex-mayor of Besançon, and a friend of Pichegru in former days, who, however, in the first instance declined to have anything to do with the business. But, when Couchery returned, and, repeating his request, gave him 1800 *francs*, he put him in communication with a milliner, a Mlle. Gille, who, seemingly, let lodgings in the Rue des Noyers. According to her own story, this woman agreed to provide a room for the citizen Prevot, a bankrupt tradesman desirous of keeping out of the reach of his creditors.¹

Pichegru remained with Mlle. Gille for four nights in all. On the second day of his stay, Couchery arrived with the alarming intelligence that Lajolais and Moreau were in custody. On hearing that Moreau was arrested, he made no remark, but, relates Couchery, could not conceal his grief and astonishment.² The news was all over the town the next morning, and, on the following day, February 17, the *Grand Juge* made a lengthy statement regarding

¹ *Procès de Georges, etc. Evidence of Xavier Janson.*

² *Ibid. Declaration de Couchery.*

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the conspiracy to the *Corps législatif*. He related the successive landings of the *Chouans* at Biville, and dealt with the projects attributed to Moreau and Pichegru, "two men whom every consideration of honour should have kept eternally apart." In conclusion, he assured the assembly that the most vigorous measures would be taken to secure those of the conspirators who were still at large.¹ That same evening, Mlle. Gille intimated to Pichegru that he could stay with her no longer. Janson, it would seem, had warned her that her lodger, the bankrupt tradesman, was in reality the ex-general for whom the police were searching so diligently.²

Pichegru's hiding-place during the next ten days remains to this day an impenetrable mystery. Like Georges he had been liberally supplied with money before leaving London, and, as has been shown, in the case of Janson and Suzanne Gille, was prepared to pay a large sum for a suitable lodging. But all that is known about him is that at night he would stealthily emerge from his place of concealment, wherever it may have been, and would meet at some appointed spot Couchery or the Marquis de Rivière. Both of them, however, always maintained that he never confided to them where he was going to, when he parted from them. Desmarest, the famous chief of the secret police, relates an anecdote, told him by Rivière, which suggests that he was deeply sensible of the humiliation of thus being obliged to skulk about the town in which, nine years before, he had been acclaimed as the first soldier of the Republic, and the saviour of the State. One night, when these hunted men had been wandering about the streets, dreading recognition and yet more fearful of returning to their lodgings, lest they should find the police awaiting them, Pichegru

¹ *Procès de Georges, etc. 1^{er} Rapport du Grand Juge.*

² *Ibid. Evidence of Suzanne Gille. Interrogatoire, 15 germinal.*

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drew his pistol, declaring he could bear no longer so intolerable an existence. It was with difficulty that Rivière succeeded in prevailing upon him to put up his weapon and renounce his intention of taking his own life.¹

After ten days spent in this fashion, Pichegru, being, apparently, obliged to find another place of concealment, threw himself upon the generosity of a couple named Treille. Treille was a stranger to him, but he had recently married a widow, a Madame Decaux, whom Pichegru had known in Alsace. Like many persons with whom he had been on friendly terms in old days, she seems to have been delighted to be of service to him. Apparently, she had no difficulty in prevailing upon her husband to allow Pichegru to occupy a room in their apartment. Treille, however, was in business, and, many people being in the habit of calling upon him, his abode was hardly fitted to be the residence of a man who was badly "wanted" by the police. In this dilemma, the Treilles appear to have explained the situation to their intimate friend, Leblanc, who had supped with them the night before in Pichegru's company. Leblanc at once relieved their anxiety by offering to place his rooms, in the Rue de Chabanais, at their guest's immediate disposal. The affair being thus arranged, he straightway went out, sought an interview with Murat, the military governor of Paris, and agreed for 100,000 *francs* to deliver up Pichegru to the police.

After supper that evening, the two Treilles and their daughter, accompanied by Pichegru and Leblanc, set out for the Rue de Chabanais. Under the *portecochère* of the house, at that time numbered 39, but at the present day 37, they wished him an affectionate "good night" and left him to follow his host upstairs

¹ Desmarest, *Quinze ans de haute police*, pp. 128-129.

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to his rooms on the second floor. Here, Leblanc explained that, having but one bed, he proposed to leave him and spend the night at the lodgings of a friend. Accordingly, after enjoining the maid-servant to look to his guest's comfort in the morning, he departed. Pichegru, left to himself, locked the door, drew a chest of drawers across it, and, having carefully placed a pistol under the pillow, went to bed. Meanwhile, Leblanc had betaken himself, not to the house of a friend, but to the office of the *Grand Juge*, where he found awaiting him a stalwart police inspector and six of his men. An hour or so later, the whole party, led by Leblanc, returned to No. 39, Rue de Chabanais, and stealthily mounted the stairs to the second floor. The policemen went no further, but Leblanc continued the ascent to the attics, in order to obtain from the maid-servant the key of his apartment. Presently, he returned and handed it over to the inspector. It is not recorded whether, having thus fulfilled his compact and earned his reward, he took himself off, or whether he remained to see the end of the business.

Turning the key softly in the lock, the policemen burst into the room, overturning with a crash the chest of drawers which barred their way, and flung themselves upon Pichegru, before he could seize his pistol. He was a very powerful man, however, and, although surprised and unable to use his weapon, resisted desperately. The startled lodgers awakened from their sleep and the frightened servant girl holding the candle at the door witnessed a hideous struggle. But it could end in one way only, although it is said to have lasted for fully a quarter of an hour. Overpowered, Pichegru was borne to the ground and firmly secured with a rope. Having drawn up his *procès-verbal* and allowed his men a brief rest after their exertions, the inspector gave the order to depart. Wrapped in a blanket, bound hand and foot, Pichegru

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was carried down the stairs, thrust into a cab and driven off to the police headquarters upon the Quai Voltaire.¹ Here, after he had been deposited upon the floor of his office, Réal proceeded to interrogate him. He refused, however, to answer most of the questions put to him. Nor, when this preliminary investigation was concluded, would he consent to sign the *procès-verbal*, declaring that he had been examined in "an insidious and insulting" manner.² Nevertheless, seeing that he was more composed, Réal released him from his ignominious bondage and allowed him to dress himself. Meanwhile, orders had been sent to the Temple to prepare for his reception. The events of the past three weeks had filled the prison to overflowing. But, by hastily removing its occupant to another part of the building, a fair-sized cell on the ground floor was made ready for him. Strange to relate, the prisoner, who was thus transferred to other quarters to make room for him, was his old acquaintance, Fauche-Borel, who had been detained without trial, ever since his arrest, in the summer of 1802. Fauche was too experienced in the customs of the gaol not to guess that his sudden removal betokened the arrival of some prisoner of importance. He, therefore, kept a sharp look-out from his new cell, and, soon after dawn, saw Pichegru brought in escorted by jailers and an unusual number of policemen. He had on a brown coat and was fully dressed, but his limping gait and wounded hand bore witness to the severity of the struggle which had preceded his arrest.³

According to M. Léonce Grasilier, whose pamphlet was referred to in the last chapter,⁴ Joliclerc, not Leblanc, was the real contriver of Pichegru's capture.

¹ F. Barbey, *La mort de Pichegru*, pp. 119-128.

² *Receuil des interrogatoires*, Pichegru, 8 ventose.

³ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, III. pp. 112-113.

⁴ V. p. 316.

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His theory is that Joliciere, being an intimate friend of Victor Couchery, kept Pichegru under close observation for about a fortnight before he was arrested. Probably, he even suggested some of the places in which the unsuspecting Pichegru concealed himself. By leaving him at liberty, the cunning police agent discovered the different persons with whom he was in communication, and thus gathered together all the threads of the conspiracy. When he had learnt enough, he caused him to be taken by simply bringing him into contact with Leblanc, or Blanc Montbrun, to give him his real name, who, for many years past, had combined his ostensible business of a stockbroker with that of a police spy. In M. Grasilier's opinion, Victor Couchery was of infinite use to the crafty Joliciere, and, without doubt, owed his subsequent acquittal to the services which he had rendered, "more or less unconsciously," to the police.¹

That Joliciere played an important part in unravelling the threads of the conspiracy may be regarded as certain. Had it been otherwise he would hardly have dared to write to Bonaparte as he did. But M. Grasilier appears to be attempting to prove too much, when he seeks to explain the exact nature of his rôle in the police operations connected with the plot. His theory that Joliciere, for ulterior reasons, deliberately left Pichegru at liberty, when he might have brought about his arrest, is unsupported by any evidence. Nor is it easy to believe that any one associated with Bonaparte's police would have acted in such a manner. In spite of the publication of the report of the *Grand Juge*, many persons disbelieved, or affected to disbelieve, in the existence of a plot. Pichegru, asserted Moreau's friends, had never been in Paris at all. The whole story, they declared, had been invented by the police for the purpose of ruining

¹ L. Grasilier, *Par qui fut livré le General Pichegru*, pp. 9-14.

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Moreau. Obviously, the arrest of Pichegru must effectually silence the not inconsiderable number of people who professed such opinions. It is inconceivable, therefore, once they were in a position to lay hands upon him, that the police should not have secured him promptly. Assuredly, the danger that he might slip through their fingers and escape to England was too great to be worth incurring for the comparatively small advantage of entrapping other conspirators of lesser importance. Moreover, if Joliclerc had contrived to penetrate the mystery of Pichegru's hiding-place, and could, in consequence, effect his capture whenever he chose, why should Leblanc have been the only recipient of the large reward paid by the government for his apprehension? M. Grasilier seems to imply that Joliclerc did not work for money, and that he was an amateur, rather than a professional, spy. That is, however, an explanation which cannot be taken seriously. With regard to the insinuations which he makes against Victor Couchery, it should be pointed out that, although the Court acquitted him, Bonaparte kept him a prisoner at Ham until his own downfall, in 1814. He would seem, therefore, to have looked upon him as a dangerous person, not as an individual who, "more or less unconsciously," had been useful to the police.

The elder Couchery, in his letter to Mr. Hammond of June 12, 1804,¹ states distinctly that Joliclerc had been in relations both with Pichegru and his brother Victor, and it is improbable that he was mistaken on that point. Furthermore, he says that Joliclerc prepared hiding-places for Pichegru which were "only of service to his brother." By these words he, presumably, means that Pichegru was arrested before he could use them, and that, in consequence, his brother alone availed himself of them. In point of

¹ F. O. France 70. Particulars relating to General Pichegru.

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fact, Victor Couchery was not taken until March 29, and was one of the last of the conspirators to be apprehended. In his case it is possible that Joliclerc may have let him remain at large, in order that through him he might discover the whereabouts of conspirators such as Rusillion, Rivière, and the Polignacs, none of whom were arrested until after Pichegru had been captured. It would be useless, however, to attempt to pursue the matter any further. To the end of time Joliclerc will, doubtless, remain a mysterious figure, and his proceedings will continue to baffle the curiosity of investigators. Up to the present, however, there would seem to be no reason for supposing that he had much to do with Pichegru's arrest, which appears to have been due entirely to Leblanc's treachery. If the somewhat doubtful testimony of Fauche-Borel¹ be accepted, Pichegru himself ascribed his capture solely to Janson, the ex-mayor of Besançon, who, it will be remembered, had advised Mlle. Gille not to allow him to remain in her rooms.

In the Temple Pichegru was kept strictly *au secret*, and was only allowed to leave his cell to undergo the frequent examinations to which he was subjected. The records of the proceedings before Réal, who officiated as investigating magistrate, are so brief that it is evident that some of them must either have been lost accidentally, or suppressed, for some reason or another. To judge from those which remain, he always comported himself with dignity, and was especially careful to avoid incriminating any of his fellow conspirators. In that respect he seems to have shown them far more consideration than he received from them in return. Apparently, he constantly adhered to his original determination, and invariably declined to sign the *procès-verbal*. Nevertheless, he seems to have had no cause to complain of his

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, III. p. 171.

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treatment. Bonaparte would not appear to have been animated by any vindictive feelings towards him, and Réal seems to have been instructed to spare him needless annoyances and humiliations. Thus, after the first few days of his imprisonment, the two *gendarmes* who had, hitherto, watched him night and day were withdrawn, and he was no longer disturbed by their presence.

Meanwhile, the search for Georges was continued with redoubled vigour. Measures, which must have reminded the citizens of Paris of the worst days of the Terror, were taken to prevent him from escaping. The gates of the city were closed, soldiers patrolled the ramparts, and not only in Paris itself, but throughout the country, arrests and domiciliary visits were ordered on the slightest pretext. To the description of the famous *Chouan*, affixed to every street corner, were added copies of a document which enacted that persons guilty of harbouring conspirators would be treated as their accomplices, and dealt with accordingly. More than a week elapsed, however, before the efforts of the police were productive of any result. But at last, on March 8, a clue was obtained which led them to believe that Georges was concealed somewhere not far from the Panthéon. Steps were, accordingly, taken, the next day, for establishing a strict watch over the whole district. The information was correct. Georges and two of his companions had been hiding for the past three weeks in an attic over a fruiterer's shop in the Rue de la Montagne-Sainte-Genève. But, sinister looking individuals having recently been seen loitering and making enquiries in the neighbourhood, he had resolved to change his quarters, and had prevailed upon Caron, the Royalist hairdresser, who had sheltered Hyde de Neuville, to conceal him in his shop in the Rue du Four. On the evening of March 9, it had been his intention

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to proceed to his new abode. The police, however, were aware that a man, well known to them as a *Chouan*, had hired the cabriolet, numbered 51, and their men on watch were instructed to look out for it. Soon after dusk, the vehicle was observed crossing the Place Maubert by two or three *mouchards*. In accordance with their orders, they made no attempt to interfere with it, until, in the Rue de la Montagne-Sainte-Genève, a burly individual emerged from the shadow of the houses and jumped into it. At the sight they raised the cry of "Georges," and called upon the driver to stop. He, however, whipped up his horse and made a frantic endeavour to escape. The policemen, shouting loudly to attract the attention of their comrades posted in the neighbourhood, started in pursuit. The narrow, crooked streets converging upon the Place de l'Odéon were all in their favour, and, at a sharp turning in the Rue des Fossés-Monsieur-le-Prince, two peace officers succeeded in reaching the horse's head and in bringing the carriage to a standstill. Georges, with a pistol in each hand, sprang to the ground. Two shots rang out and both men fell, one dead the other badly wounded. But their comrades were close behind, and an inspector, who had arrived breathless upon the scene, perceived Georges standing calmly in the crowd, seeking to pass himself off as an innocent spectator. Seeing that he was recognized, and that further resistance was useless, he surrendered quietly. When brought before Dubois, the *préfet de police*, he boldly declared that his purpose in coming to Paris had been to attack the First Consul. But he refused to name any of his accomplices. At the conclusion of this, his first examination, he was conveyed to the Temple and lodged in a cell adjoining that of Pichegru.

A little more than a week after Georges' arrest, rumours were current in the Temple that the arrival of

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a prisoner of the highest rank was hourly expected.¹ The next day, March 21, the voices of the street criers announcing the midnight execution at Vincennes of the Duc d'Enghien explained how the report had arisen. The story of his seizure at Ettenheim in the Grand Duchy of Baden has been told so often that no repetition of it is necessary. Suffice it to say that even Bonaparte's most devoted admirers have been forced to admit that the unfortunate grandson of Condé was in no way connected with the plot of 1804. The Duc d'Enghien was not, however, the only person who was carried off by the French troops, on the occasion of their raid into the Duchy of Baden. Among others the Baronne de Reich, the spy, who it will be remembered was employed by Wickham and the Austrian Staff,² was arrested at her house at Offenburg and conveyed to Paris. The postmaster at Kehl, who was in Drake's pay, was, also, apprehended, but seems to have been released after a short detention. Drake, who was fearful that his correspondence with Mehée might have been seized, was greatly relieved to learn that no compromising letters had been discovered at the Kehl post office. "I trust we have weathered this storm," he wrote to Hawkesbury, on March 23.³ But he was speedily undeceived.

The arrest of the Duc d'Enghien upon the neutral territory of Baden had evoked protests from all the great European Courts. In these circumstances, Bonaparte judged that the time had come for making public the correspondence which Drake and Spencer Smith had been carrying on with Mehée and with Rosey. The attempts of the British ministers at Munich and Stuttgart to stir up disaffection in the interior of France might be regarded as some kind of a justification

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, III. pp. 113-111.

² V. p. 101.

³ F. O. Bavaria 28. Drake to Hawkesbury, March 23, 1804.

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for his violation of the frontiers of Baden. The whole correspondence upon which they had entered so unwarily was, accordingly, published in the *Moniteur*, and the French representatives at the different European capitals were directed to furnish the Courts, to which they were accredited, with copies of Drake's instructions to Mehée and of Rosey's report of his transactions with Spencer Smith. At the same time, Bonaparte demanded that the Courts of Munich and of Stuttgart should insist upon the recall of the two ministers in question. Both Courts made haste to comply with his wishes. The terror which he inspired in the smaller German States had been intensified by his recent incursion into Baden. Drake, indeed, without awaiting the instructions of his government, would appear to have quitted Munich with the greatest precipitation. Spencer Smith, who was not so deeply compromised, seems to have behaved with more dignity and to have remained at Stuttgart, until he received Lord Hawkesbury's orders to return to England.

Pichegru, meanwhile, was still retained *au secret* in the Temple. Although not allowed to communicate with his fellow prisoners, he was well aware that not only Georges, but the Polignacs, Rivière and all the chief conspirators had been taken. It appears to have been intimated to him that he might expect lenient treatment and that, eventually, Bonaparte might be disposed to employ him upon some colonial mission.¹ M. Thiers is, therefore, inclined to think that the act which put an end to his existence was largely due to disappointment that Réal, having dangled the prospect of honourable employment before his eyes, should have made no further mention of the matter.²

On the morning of April 6, when the jailer entered his cell he found him, apparently, fast asleep. But,

¹ Desmarest, *Quinze ans de haute police*, pp. 133-135.

² Thiers, *Histoire du Consulat*, V. pp. 45-46.



SIR FRANCIS DRAKE, (*Partant de Munich, et retournant à Londres*
avec ses Cartes, ses Correspondances, ses Livres sympathiques et ses Chefs
Apud non e qui muscas!!! *NON* *W Drake e est point un Geste W-drake!!!*)

Francis Drake, from a contemporary caricature

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having lit the fire and performed other small services, he was struck by the prisoner's strange immobility. Going to his bedside, he discovered the reason of his unnatural quietude. Pichegru had been dead for some hours. About midnight, as it would seem, using a piece of firewood as a *tourniquet*, he had contrived to strangle himself with his neckcloth. At the subsequent enquiry into the circumstances of his death, it was adduced in evidence that on a shelf within reach of his bed lay a volume of the works of Seneca which he had borrowed, the day before, from Réal. The book was open at the passage in which the philosopher discourses upon the suicide of the younger Cato.¹

The discovery of a conspiracy to overthrow Bonaparte and the announcement that the victor of Hohenlinden was in prison on a charge of complicity in the plot caused the deepest excitement in Paris. The arrest on foreign territory of the Duc d'Enghien and his hurried execution at Vincennes increased the popular ferment. In these circumstances, the news that Pichegru had been found strangled in his cell gave rise to the wildest rumours. Stories that he had been done to death by Bonaparte's myrmidons were circulated freely. Indeed, for more than half a century after these events, the impartial historian, while careful to point out that the balance of probabilities favoured the hypothesis of suicide, generally admitted the possibility that he might have been the victim of foul play. But, of late years, the theory that he was murdered has generally been discarded. After the restoration of the monarchy, the manner of his death was made the subject of a minute investigation, but no evidence worthy

¹ C. M. Pierret, *Pichegru, son procès et son suicide*, pp. 42-48. Pierret appears to be an impartial witness. He was called in to identify Pichegru. He states that the volume in question was a French translation of the works of Seneca published in 1752.

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of the name was ever produced to substantiate the charge that Bonaparte caused him to be killed. Fauche's story¹ of a midnight scuffle and of the head jailer's alleged attempts to persuade him and other prisoners that nothing unusual had occurred during the night, is quite uncorroborated and may be regarded as a pure invention.

But, perhaps, the strongest reason for believing that Pichegru died by his own hand lies in the fact that it was not to the interest of the First Consul to make away with him secretly. The discovery of the Royalist plot had strengthened Bonaparte's position and increased his popularity. The indignation which it had evoked had enabled him to put into execution his long-cherished plan of assuming the Imperial title. Nevertheless, the approaching trial of the conspirators gave him cause for grave anxiety. There was, he knew well, a serious undercurrent of discontent in the army. Many of the senior officers still adhered to those republican ideals to which Moreau was supposed to be devotedly attached. Certain of them, it was notorious, believed, or pretended to believe, that the whole story of the plot had been invented by the police, for the purpose of ruining the man who stood in the way of Bonaparte's ambitious designs. It was, consequently, to be apprehended that Moreau's condemnation might be followed by some violent expression of dissent on the part of the army. But the danger of any explosion of that kind would be greatly diminished, could it be shown that this popular hero had been, for years past, on terms of suspicious intimacy with an ex-general of the Republic, who, while in command of a French army, had entered into treasonable relations with the enemy. Without doubt, Réal described the position correctly when he exclaimed, on first hearing of Pichegru's death, that it had deprived Bonaparte

¹ Fauche-Borel, *Mémoires*, III. pp. 125-142.

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of his most important *pièce de conviction* against Moreau.¹

The production of the Klinglin papers and other documents of that description at Moreau's trial show that it was Bonaparte's intention to discredit him by establishing his former connection with Pichegru. For the execution of this plan, the government had a ready instrument at hand in Montgaillard, who, by this time, was a regular agent of the consular secret service. That individual, when he had definitely made his peace with the Republic, soon after the 18 *fructidor*, had drawn up a detailed account of his relations with Pichegru, in the years 1795 and 1796. He was now directed to amplify his former narrative and publish it to the world. It is not improbable that it was the appearance of the *mémoire concernant la trahison de Pichegru* which determined Pichegru to put an end to his existence. It is significant that Montgaillard's pamphlet made its appearance in the first days of April, and that the man whose treasonable proceedings it revealed was found dead in his prison on the morning of the 6th.

Some six weeks after Pichegru's death, the trial of forty-seven of the conspirators began in Paris. After lasting twelve days, the proceedings terminated in the condemnation to death of Georges and nineteen of the accused. Moreau was not among those against whom the extreme penalty was pronounced. Being found guilty only upon certain minor counts in the indictment, he was condemned merely to a short term of imprisonment, and even this punishment was not carried out, the sentence being at once commuted by the new Emperor into one of banishment. Moreau, accordingly, betook himself to the United States where he remained until 1813, when he returned to Europe, and, taking service in the Russian army, was killed,

¹ Desmarest, *Quinze ans de haute police*, p. 183.

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the same year, by a French round shot in action before Dresden. Bonaparte, also, remitted the death sentences passed upon Rivière, Armand de Polignac, Lajolais and several others. But no mercy was extended to the *Chouans*, eleven of whom with their famous chief were guillotined on the Place de Grève, on June 25, 1804. "We have achieved more than we intended," Georges is reported to have said as he was being conveyed to the place of execution. "We purposed to restore the King and we have set up an Emperor."¹

Fauche-Borel, strange to say, was never brought to trial, but, having been retained a prisoner until 1806, was set at liberty. According to his own story, he owed his escape to the fact that, as a citizen of Neufchatel he was a subject of the King of Prussia, and that the Court of Berlin insisted upon his release. This explanation, however, was disbelieved both by the French Royalists and by the British government. Henceforward, he was always regarded with suspicion, and, although after the restoration of the monarchy in France, he was accorded a small pension, he never was able to clear himself from the imputation of having saved his life, in 1804, by giving information to Bonaparte's police. His remaining years seem to have been spent in constant struggles with pecuniary difficulties, and in vain endeavours to obtain adequate recognition for the services which he professed to have rendered to the good cause. In 1829, he published his memoirs, and, in the course of the same year, committed suicide by throwing himself from a window of his house at Neufchatel.

During the whole period of the Empire, Montgailard appears to have found employment in the secret channels of Bonaparte's diplomacy. But, although he seems to have entertained a high opinion of his

¹ Desmarest, *Quinze ans de haute police*, p. 109.

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political astuteness, Bonaparte always regarded him as a rogue who must never be trusted. His relations with the fallen Emperor did not, however, prevent him from obtaining a pension from the Bourbons, when they returned to France. But after the Revolution of July his fortunes declined. The allowance which he had enjoyed under the restored monarchy was discontinued by the "citizen King," who had, apparently, no cause to fear his indiscretions, and, in 1835, he died in poverty and obscurity. The same fate seems to have overtaken most of the agents connected with Pichegru's treason. Demougé is believed to have been enrolled among Fouché's spies, Lajolais certainly died in prison, while Badonville found congenial employment as a traveller for a firm of wine merchants.¹ In the course of business he visited England, during the peace of Amiens, and saw Pichegru, but he appears to have had nothing to do with the plot of 1804.

Much can be urged in extenuation of the conduct of those Royalists, who left France during the Revolution and entered the service of their country's enemies. Under the old *régime* the allegiance of a French noble was dynastic, not patriotic. It was to his King, not to his country, that he owed his first duty. But in Pichegru's case no such excuse can be pleaded. He was not an aristocrat, who refusing to subscribe to the new doctrines, preferred to follow his princes into exile, and enter the armies of the coalition. On the contrary, he had at once adopted the principles of the revolution, and had risen with incredible rapidity to the highest position to which as a soldier he could hope to attain. It was at the time when he held the most important command in the armies of the Republic that he embarked upon his treasonable practices.

The rulers of France, in 1795, were prosecuting the

¹ He had been dismissed the army in 1799.

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war, mainly because they considered that their own position would be endangered by a return to peaceful conditions. In such circumstances, an honourable man in Pichegru's place might conceivably have lent himself to a plan for re-establishing the monarchy, in the hope that his sorely tried country would thereby obtain peace and a stable form of government. Pichegru, however, it is scarcely possible to doubt, was actuated solely by personal motives. Like many others he was convinced that the days of the Republic were numbered, and, when the end should come, he thought it probable that one of his fellow generals would proclaim the King. Fauche, consequently, found him very responsive to his overtures and particularly desirous that the Bourbon princes should realize that he was anxious to serve their cause, should the occasion arise. In the first instance, it is probable that he wished to avoid committing himself deeply and purposed to wait upon events. But he was unable to preserve this attitude for long. Some six weeks after his first interview with Fauche, the campaign was opened and he was forced to lead his army against the enemy, while from Paris he received the news that the *sections* were about to rise and that the Republic would, doubtless, be overthrown. In this dilemma, it is practically certain that he deliberately allowed his army to sustain a defeat upon the Neckar, rather than incur the displeasure of the Bourbons by achieving a victory which appears to have been within his grasp. But scarcely had he withdrawn to Mannheim, after the failure of his operations against Heidelberg, than he learnt that the *sections* had been crushed and that the Directory was installed in power. Thinking, probably, that he had now gone too far to draw back and that too many people knew of his treason, he seems to have come to the conclusion that his one chance of safety lay in encompassing the annihilation of his

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army, which still trusted him implicitly. Can it be wondered that such a decision should have left its trace upon his countenance, and that Fauche, when he saw him at Mannheim, should have been struck by his changed and haggard appearance? Having taken his resolution he adhered to it relentlessly. Henceforward, he corresponded with Wickham, accepted Pitt's gold and disclosed his plans and intentions to the chief spy of the Austrian staff. In the closing months of 1795, only the supineness of the Imperial generals seems to have preserved the Army of the Rhine from complete destruction.

Before the *coup d'état* of *fructidor*, Pichegru, in all his plottings, seems to have displayed considerable sagacity and to have given proof that he possessed some perception of the political forces which were at work in revolutionary France. But from the time of his arrival in England, after his escape from Cayenne, he became a mere conspirator, ready to embark upon any scheme having for its object the overthrow of the French Republic. In these pages it has been shown that the conspiracy of 1804, which cost him his life, was merely an amplification of the plot, hatched by Georges and Hyde de Neuville, some three years before. In both the assassination of Bonaparte was to be the signal for a military *pronunciamento*. Furthermore, an attempt has been made to elucidate the question as to how far the intentions of the conspirators were known to the members of His Majesty's government. Windham's diary has been adduced to show that he, at least, was under no illusions, but was perfectly aware of the measures by which they hoped to achieve their ends. That document makes it clear that, although he expressed some mild disapproval, when they avowed their intentions, and carefully abstained from participating in any discussion as to the means to be employed for removing Bonaparte, he

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did nothing to prevent the Royalists from carrying out their designs. On the contrary, he supplied them with money and with the means of returning to France.

In 1803, however, Windham had retired from office and no longer kept that particular diary which sheds so much light upon the relations of the conspirators with certain members of the British government. But, although his successor and the ministers and the officials who had dealings with the Royalists appear carefully to have refrained from committing their impressions to paper, it is inconceivable that they were ignorant of the purpose for which Georges was going to Paris. His natural sphere of operations was Brittany, and the only motive he could have for proceeding to the capital was that he wished personally to superintend the execution of that *coup essentiel* which his agents, on former occasions, had failed to carry out successfully. Moreover, Yorke was on friendly terms with Windham, and, as is shown by their correspondence, was in the habit of consulting him about the business of his department. It is, therefore, highly improbable that he omitted to seek his advice about the expediency of sending Georges and Pichegru to Paris. In these circumstances, it might be expected that some reference to the Royalist plot would be found in that diary which Windham always kept, whether he were in, or out of, office. But, when it was published, in 1866, the editor had to explain that that portion of it which covered the year 1804 could not be reproduced, it having either been lost or accidentally destroyed.

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